No. 1251

SPAIN

THE STORY OF A JOURNEY

JOZEF ISRAËLS

NOTE.—MR. ISRAËLS' *original drawings for this book, as well as other Works of the Painter, will be exhibited early in November at the Holland Fine Art Gallery, 235a Regent Street, W., where information as to their price may be obtained.*

JOZEF ISRAËLS

After the Painting by JAN VETH

SPAIN

The Story of a Journey. By JOZEF ISRAËLS. With Photogravure Portrait and Thirty-nine Reproductions of Drawings by the Author

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH BY

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Mr. Jozef Israëls, the most powerful of the modern Dutch painters, was born at Groningen on the 27th of January, 1824, of Jewish parents. After spending a few years in his father's banking-house, he entered the studio of Jan Kruseman in Amsterdam, devoting himself to the painting of historical pictures, an occupation which he continued in Paris, where he studied under Paul Delaroche.

It was not until some time after his final return to Holland that he began to paint the life around him, simply, as he saw it, with the earnestness and directness that make him the most lyrical and sympathetic of living artists. This was in the very early sixties. Since then, he has painted master-piece upon master-piece; and his work has ever been above criticism.

His brush sings the joys and sorrows of humble folk. It is for this reason that writers who love comparisons have spoken of him as the Dutch Millet. The description, if not overflowing in originality, is in no way misleading. But I prefer to think of Mr. Israëls as simply the most popular painter of the day, in this, the best, sense, that his work claims

the admiration, not only of the critics, the collectors, and the *dilettanti*, but also of those uncultured people who, knowing nothing of painting, having no care for artisticity or virtuosity, are yet penetrated by the poetry that fills each of the veteran's canvases.

Mr. Israëls, although over seventy-five years of age, is still one of the busiest of men. In the spring of 1898 he permitted himself a holiday, in company with his son Isaac, himself a painter of merit, and Mr. Frans Erens, a young man of letters. This holiday took the form of a journey through Spain and is the subject of the present volume.

A. T. DE M.

LONDON, *September*, 1899.

ALEIDA

A flower in my garden grew,
A flower fair and fragile; and
There came a tempest, broke its stem,
And cast it down in the dry sand.

This is the image of my dear,
Of her who filled with joy my life,
Of her within whose eyes I read
My wealth and solace—my sweet wife.

She is no more; but ever yet
Her image fills me, at all times:
Wherefore to her I dedicate
This little book in halting rhymes.

EVERYTHING has, in a fashion, its peculiar character. The end which we achieve by painting, we cannot attain by music or letters; and if, again, a man would tell a story, or set forth his opinions on this matter or that, it is necessary that he talk or write. Therefore I have for this once changed the gliding pencil for the scratching pen, and put aside the many-coloured paints to do the best I can with sober ink.

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BY WAY OF COMMENCEMENT

HERE, on the table at which I write, lies a little book which I always take up with a certain satisfaction. True, it bears evidence of having been long used and many times consulted, for its pages are creased, its binding almost worn away; but this could not well be otherwise, for the book has so long been the trusty guardian of all my observations and reflections, and in it I have noted down all that I saw or heard on the journey of which I propose to tell you.

Anxious as I was for its preservation, I often thought that it was lost: now it was hidden in this,

now in that side-pocket, or worse, buried in a portfolio filled with drawings of every kind and size; but happily, in spite of all that, in spite of having accompanied me wherever I went, and experienced the strangest places of concealment, it landed safely here, in the right place, on my return home.

Yet I believe for certain that, if any one, prompted by curiosity or interest, should cast a glance into my little book, he would shrug his shoulders and lay it aside. He would make nothing of all those marks and little drawings, filled up with crosses and notes of exclamation, a confusion of red and black chalk, in which are drawings of little landscapes and little figures, with all kinds of notes and comments written across them in ink, here and there corrected or erased.

For me, however, this is very different. I have but for a moment to fix my attention on any one of these pages to be carried forthwith to the place to which it refers; yes, at the very first glance, I once more hear and see all that by its means is recalled to me. Again I ride on my little grey steed through the glorious heights of the Sierra Nevada, again I hear the cheers of the wildly excited crowds at the bull-fights. Then, too, the pictures at the Prado appear clearly before my vision; and fierce Tangiers, and noble Granada, and ever so much more—all stands out distinctly before my eyes. After I had returned to my own house and my own arm-chair, I often sat dreaming over that little book by the still light of the lamp, and the idea came upon me of disentangling all it contains and writing it down. Now I have brought a certain order into the wilderness, and I will begin by telling how, one fine morning in April, I stood in my garden thinking over my journey.

It was early on an April morning, a little windy and cool, as is usual with us; but the sun shone gaily from out the blue sky strewn with white clouds. It gleamed in each dew-clad blade of grass, and upon the newly-opened pink blossoms of my peach-trees. In my sitting-room reigned a particular delight. Three windows were thrown open wide upon the Malieveld, and the leafy boughs of the trees standing before the house would make one think that my room is built out in a garden. And here I live surrounded by beautiful faces of women: on one wall hangs Raphael's Dresden Madonna, and on the other the Madonna by Holbein; and under each of these hangs a portrait of her whom I myself have canonized. A little further hangs Rembrandt's Night Watch, which always reminds me of the mighty witch-craft that lies in painting. And when in the morning the sunlight plays and frolics among all this, and break-fast stands ready, and the water sings in the tea-kettle —at such a moment I look round in this little corner of the world, arranged for me alone, and I rejoice.

THE TRAVELLING PARTY

SUDDENLY the door opened, and two youths entered the room. It was my son, accompanied by a young man of almost the same age and figure.

"My friend Erens," said he, introducing him.

"Ah," I cried, as I gave him my hand, "I am glad to welcome the author of *Berbke.*"

Erens bowed and laughed, as he replied:

"Well, I should really never have ventured to give you that lady's name as my reference."

Yet this story of *Berbke* had touched me greatly when I read it. It is a simple tale of a foolish, half-witted peasant-girl, who is laughed at wherever she appears, who is dismissed from all the places where she goes into service, and who is at last found dead by the roadside—filthy and starved. Figures, landscape, and surroundings, all were well seen, well felt.

"I can see," said my son, "that I have not done wrong. I wanted to propose that you should take my friend with us as the third of our company, and for the three of us to do the journey together, if you approve."

"A happy thought," said I. "Painters judge everything from outside appearances, and rightly, for that is their only province. But it will be a great privilege to take a poet and philosopher with us to

seize and retain the profounder suggestion of what passes."

A parcel of books which "the young gentleman" had left in the hall was brought in by the servant.

"Look here," he exclaimed; "here is some splendid reading to prepare us on the road: *Philippe II., roi de toutes les Espagnes, d'après des documents récemment découverts.* Then I have a pleasantly written book by Théophile Gauthier on his Spanish journey; and a splendid little book by an unknown author, *L'Espagne chevaleresque*, and a collection of *Lettres sur l'Espagne* by all sorts of people, men and women; and when we have read all that, I have still got the *Cid* and some plays by Calderon and Lope de Vega."

"Good heavens, what a number of books!" I cried. "Those may be all very well, but I have what will be of more direct use to us, two books which can serve as guide-books: one is by a polite and diffuse Frenchman, Germond de la Vigne; the other by Hartleben, a well-informed and precise German. We shall see them differing sometimes, and be able to judge which is right."

We all three brought our chairs up to the table. A large map of Spain was spread out upon it, and we sat with books and papers before us, measuring heights and distances, and already travelling in our fancy across the rivers and mountains of Spain to Cadiz, to Morocco and Tangiers, the nearest city in dusky Africa.

ON THE ROAD

WE had fixed the first of the fair month of May for our departure. I passed everything in my house in a last survey, from the cellar to the garret and . . . . my studio! Yes, one last farewell to my working-den, which always tries to hold me indoors; and then I flew downstairs to join my travelling-companions, who were impatiently awaiting me below.

The travelling-carriage stood before the door, surrounded by the usual inquisitive crowd, and when leave had been taken all round, my thoughtful friend van Witsen whispered in my son's ear:

"Be sure and take care of the governor."

"Oh," cried my son, "make your mind easy; from henceforth I am courier, paymaster, and keeper, anything you please; and our friend Erens will put down everything in verse. Whip up, coachman; to Spain!"

Thus we drove into the world that day, intent upon everything that should present itself. Dutch painters are strange people to undertake a journey. Scarcely have they taken their seats in the train, before they begin to admire their own country: we commenced as soon as we reached Rotterdam. Look, those shadows of the clouds on the meadows; and those willow-trees over there, mirrored in the surface

of the water! What a pity one can't make a study here and now. There is no country so beautiful as ours.

And in Belgium the landscape, the perspectives, the houses and figures do, in fact, become much less attractive; but we soon covered the distance, shut our eyes tight at the Antwerp fortifications, and stepped out at Brussels, which was our first station.

We had naturally intended to retire to rest at Brussels soon after dinner, but our waiter came up to us, fawning and bowing, and asked if he should order seats for us for Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde—eine schöne Abendunterhaltung* he called it—and thus, at the commencement of our journey, we fell plump into the midst of the most passionate love-story ever set forth in music.

Ah, how much rather had I seen Heaven open before me in *Figaro's Hochzeit;* yet I was glad to hear the other masterpiece too. For there is so much that is beautiful without being just the one thing of all that touches your heart-strings, because it strikes you as proceeding from the same atmosphere in which you yourself live and rejoice. And so we went; and I sat and let the glorious flood of harmony of Wagner's poem pass over me; I wished to stay till the end, the real end; and when I beheld the curtain fall with a sense of relief—for I felt beaten and oppressed by all I had seen and heard—I looked round for my companions.

"*Ah!*" said the attendant. "*Ces messieurs n'y ont pas tenu.*"

So I walked back to my hotel alone, in the moonlight, dreaming and musing as I went. Had I enjoyed

myself, had I been charmed by the magic which had played about me? I could not give myself a true account of it, I was under the influence of an indescribable nervous impression, produced by the music of love and longing which still murmured around me . . . . until, without knowing how, I got into bed and fell asleep, convinced that on my waking I should find the noble Isolde standing by the head of my Brussels bedstead.

When I awoke I saw, not Isolde, but my two travelling-companions standing by my side, and apologizing for their mysterious disappearance last night. They had been overcome, they said, with yawning and sleepiness, and were full of the fun they had had at a music-hall hard by the hotel. They called to me to come down to breakfast before the train left for Paris.

PARIS

TO the traveller to a foreign land the journey *viâ* Paris means—as in our case—a spoke in his wheel. How can he pass through Paris without lingering a while? There are only three trains a week to Madrid; and thus, by means of careful calculation, we were able to employ our time pleasantly.

Paris is for many good people the one city of enjoyment and delight. You have but to look at the boulevard, with all those gentlemen and ladies who sit before the cafés staring, where there is nothing to see, or crowd hurrying along the pavement, with no destination in view. It is as though that multitude had always sat, and would ever continue to sit, there. And then the brilliant dancing-places, Jardin de Paris, or whatever they're called, where gay women and sinister idlers foregather, where a glaring illumination lights up nothing but tasteless arbours and saloons crammed with mirrors and bars, and where a noisy merriment reigns on every side—under police supervision, if you please.

But you can also, seated like a swell in your carriage, ride up and down the Bois de Boulogne, surrounded by hundreds of other carriages, all of which, with the same object, or rather without any object, drive up and down, round and round, at a

walking pace, in one long array, before, behind, on either side of you, always the same coachmen, the same horses' heads, until at last you drive home again amid a crush of others like yourself. Perhaps you have first tried to find a shady corner in a restaurant; but the crowd of people has made this difficult, and if you have stayed some little while, and have not spent enough to please the proprietor, you can be asked to vacate your seat in favour of a more profitable customer. Do you enjoy this sort of thing? I don't.

Talk to me rather of the really gay and interesting side of Paris, the beautiful city, the excellent theatres, the pleasant matinées, the concerts, lectures, and exhibitions which you find nowhere else; and the delightful parks, full of fragrant flowers and plants, the rich museums and libraries, the many public buildings where you feel so much at home, thanks to the pleasant arrangements made on the visitors' behalf. That is what makes Paris the unique metropolis, where every one, whatever his branch of art or science, whatever his hobby, can find all that interests him, and much more than he ever expected to find.

Once again we had proofs of this in the very short time at our disposal. By a mere chance, we walked into a little theatre in which a *conférence* was being held. On the stage sat a grave gentleman, who commented upon a poem which was presently recited by a young lady; and she did this with such consummate taste, clearness, and sweet sympathy as really to incline one to believe that with no language but the French so fine an effect could be obtained. And then the actors, even those of the Palais-Royal: is it not as though those people really exist amid the situations

in which they are placed, and as though they do not know that they are treading the boards?

Then again we visited a most charming exhibition of works by Paul Renouard, which alone was worth a journey to see. But we were also duped by our curiosity into looking in upon the exhibition of the *peintres indépendants*. Here the symbolists, the free æsthetes, the *pointilleurs*, and naturalists of all countries had joined hands; even a Dutch lady had sent in a horrible thing for exhibition. However, a little dinner and a good glass of wine soon set us right. The time had come to take leave of Lutetia, and with bag and baggage we sped to the Gare d'Orléans.

IN THE TRAIN

WE arrived at the station at about half-past five, and after a long search the guard found the compartment which had been reserved for our party. It was a great, long train, the *train de luxe* which was to take us to San Sebastian ; the guard, a Spaniard with grave and distinguished manners, showed us to the seats we had engaged, and we disposed our belongings so as to ensure our comfort on the day and night journey. We next went, with the greatest curiosity, to inspect all

there was to be seen in this corridor train, with its restaurant, smoking-room, and so on; but when we returned from our expedition to our own compartment, No. 7, rubbing our hands with pleasure at being by ourselves again after all this mixture, we opened our eyes with disappointment and surprise. For we found installed in our carriage an elderly gentleman, who, sitting at his ease, pulled off his shoes, put on a pair of carpet slippers, drew a woollen travelling-cap over his ears, laid his pocket-handkerchief and snuff-box upon our table, and seemed to be making himself quite comfortable in the compartment which we had engaged for ourselves. We looked at one another, at a loss what to say or do.

"*Mais, monsieur!*" I said, restraining my annoyance as best I could. "Monsieur, I was under the impression that I should be alone here with my friends. Have I made a mistake, and have I come to the wrong carriage?"

I was quite sure that I had made no mistake, and only asked the question so as to show the man the impropriety of his behaviour. I refused to listen to his arguments, shouted angrily through the window for the guard, and red in the face, and with quivering hands, resumed my seat. In fact, I believe that we all three cast furious glances at the intruder, who threatened to make life miserable for us at the very commencement of our journey.

The little old man, on the other hand, turned a very friendly and engaging face towards us, and sat down calmly in the place in dispute. With an easy and peaceful smile, he said:

"You are quite right, gentlemen, those are your

seats; but if you will read this, you will see that this one is mine."

He very politely showed us his ticket, and proved to us in the friendliest fashion that we had been deceived in thinking we had booked the whole compartment; we had only paid for three seats, the compartment held four, and this fourth seat belonged to him, Señor Tenorio.

We found ourselves in a ridiculous and difficult position, when it became necessary to change our recent hostile tone into one of civil intercourse. But it was easy to get the ship of conversation afloat with so polite a man; and it soon appeared that our supposed enemy was the very man to entertain us with all sorts of interesting things, just as though we had engaged him for the purpose.

He told us that he was born in Madrid, had been Spanish Ambassador at St. Petersburg, was now living in his native country, and returning from a trip to Paris. He discussed the correctness of our guide-books; told us what to see and what was of no importance; talked of the Spanish character and how best to treat it; proved himself, in short, a living guide-book and an entertaining companion, an adept both at travelling and conversation. And it was this kind, friendly, gentle Spaniard whom we had wanted to expel from our cage like a wild bird. Our attitude must have appeared constrained, but Señor Tenorio did not allow us to perceive that he noticed any alteration.

Fortunately the cook came to relieve us from our embarrassment, with the announcement that dinner was served; and this business, so generally welcomed,

in our case marked a total transition from war to peace. We pressed our friend Tenorio to go in to dinner with us, an invitation which was gladly accepted.

We passed along a gangway running between the benches, and came to a little narrow bridge which hung between heaven and earth, shook violently as we stepped upon it, and connected the drawing-room with the dining-room car. There we sat in easy arm-chairs, each party at a separate table, beside a large window. But it was difficult to let one's eyes rest upon any object, or to keep one's thoughts collected. The noise and clatter of spoons and plates, bottles and glasses, within was nothing to the roar of the wind, the thunder and rattling of the train, without. Everything was in movement; the sky drifted with fleeting clouds, whose sharp edges looked like wrought gold. Everything moved, shook, and shivered; and amid all this bustle we endeavoured to exalt the every-day business of eating and drinking by calling for a bottle of champagne, so as to put ourselves in temper with the general movement around us.

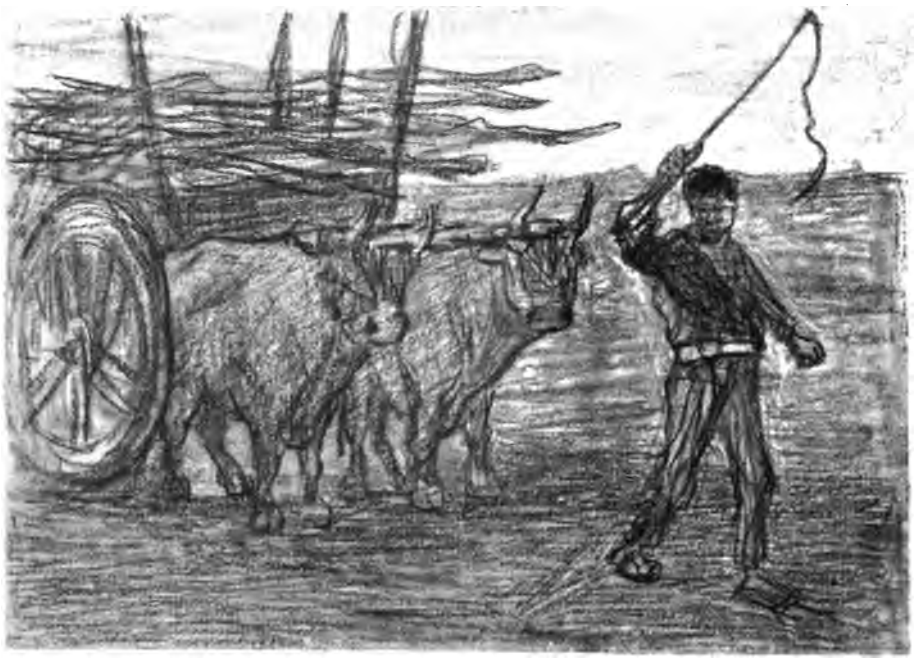
It is wonderful how one's geniality and sociability increase with the after-dinner cigar. We exchanged questions and answers as to our respective circumstances, families, and modes of life; we ended by asking our friend Tenorio if he was married. He took a very handsome snuff-box from his pocket; for he was constantly taking snuff between the puffs of his cigarette, a habit common among Spaniards. He showed us the box, which had a lid of inlaid ivory, charmingly painted with the portrait of a young woman. He calmly replaced the snuff-box in his pocket, and said:

"The original of that portrait was the woman I loved, but whether I was really married to her or not I am, alas, unable to say. I may tell you that in my youth I was very different from the man you see before you, and my apparent repose, which I have since acquired, did not at that time form part of my nature. I belong to a real Spanish family; we are men of strong and tempestuous passions; but I have learnt much in the course of my diplomatic career. Many years ago, however, I was attached to the legation at one of the small German courts. I was dark of hair and complexion, quick-tempered, perhaps a little fierce in manner. I dared everything and believed in my luck. Like all Spaniards, I loved music; and in the evening, when I was not wanted at the minister's, I used to visit a first-rate music-master. Of course there was a daughter. She did not speak much, and sat listening in a corner; but her dark eyes and agreeable manners seemed to convey to me all that a young man of twenty-five looks for in a girl of eighteen. I think she was one of the most singular women in the world. She was always active, always taking part in things; but she never seemed to reflect. She drifted on, and somehow we found ourselves being married by a parson of the so-called Free Communion, since she was a Protestant and I a Catholic. Her parents refused to accept the marriage, declared it illegal, and brought a complaint before the courts, their daughter being still a minor. There was nothing for it but that each of us should go our own way; for I was entirely dependent upon my family, who were very strict Catholics and threatened to disown me. In the face of prospective poverty our union came to an end.

I worked hard, however, and met with promotion and success at St. Petersburg; but many years passed, I know not how many, before I felt justified in seeking out my first love, so that I might contract a lawful marriage with her. Midway on the journey, I met a member of her family, who still remembered me. I asked him a number of eager questions, and learned, to my amazement, that my former wife was legally married to a professor at the high-school, and that they were living happily together. I was dejected and dismayed, decided not to continue my journey, and returned to the place whence I had come. A fortnight later I received a letter from her which surprised but did not pain me. She set forth the reasons which had made it impossible for her to remain unmarried: the difficulty of providing for herself, insults received at home, love for her present husband. These had driven her into marriage. She had not forgotten me. She invited me to spend a few weeks with herself and her husband, who knew our story; and she relied upon the moral rectitude of her husband, of myself, of herself. This letter aroused in me a feeling of sadness and depression; it gave me a sense of the futility of all our work and striving, of the loss of all our illusions. Since that time I have abandoned sanguine ideas concerning marriage, and all my happiness lies in peace and quiet."

Gradually we too had been lulled to peace and quietness, partly by the recital, partly by the darkness without. Night had fallen, and one by one the travellers left the dining-room. Overcome with sleep, we crossed the mysterious little bridge, and returned to our sombre compartment.

It was a barren night; and they call this the *train de luxe!* Oh, for my easy bed and spacious bedroom. Here I lay, outstretched, for my pleasure, like a monk on the gridiron; the ceiling formed a second bed, but a couple of feet above my head: another traveller lay above me, coughing, moaning, snoring. I dozed now and again, though I ached in every joint. I slept and waked together; I dreamt unceasingly; one of my oldest friends, long dead, raised a threatening finger to me and conjured me to go no further, to turn back forthwith. He lay across my chest; but now and then a scream came from the engine, driving every dream away. Then I would look around; all was darkness about me, save that red gleaming sparks seemed to fill the gloom and constantly hurt my eyes. The thunder and rattle of the train hurt my poor head; the engine was mine enemy, that took no heed of my silent plaints, tearing on incessantly. Suddenly I received the strange impression that a change had come over our movement; the thumping and bumping of the train decreased, it seemed to suffer inward convulsions, to breathe with difficulty. And in truth the train had stopped. There is a little window in my bunk, with a curtain over it, penetrated by the soft grey morning light. Yes, yes, we have crossed the frontier, we are at Irun. My friends, welcome to Spain!



FIRST DAYS IN SPAIN

FROM Irun to San Sebastian is "just a step," as my friend Mesdag would say. We reached our destination quite early in the morning; but I was too tired, and was suffering too much from the effects of my privations of the night, to look round at the new sights that offered to my view. Let me confess that the first thing I did in the land of Don Quixote and Gil Blas was to creep between the sheets and fall asleep, with the blissful sensation of stability beneath me and stillness all around.

I had slept delightfully for about an hour, when

I was awakened by the fine clear light streaming in upon me. I found that I was housed in a real Spanish room, with walls distempered in a thin cobalt blue, a very large window with a balcony and iron rail, and a real stone floor paved with red octagonal tiles. True, a very narrow strip of carpet lay just in the middle of the space before the bed (which was many sizes too large for me), and it was therefore possible for me, by getting out very carefully, to safeguard my feet against the first cold shock of the red paving. But my attention was soon drawn from my surroundings by a sight which I saw approaching from a distance through the great window.

I had no time to lose if I did not wish this spectacle to pass before I had well seen it; and half-dressed, half in my night-clothes, I quickly threw up the window and stepped out on the balcony. There I stood, happy as a child, thinking everything remarkable that presented itself before my eyes, and looking upon the *carretero* passing beneath my balcony, with his great waggon loaded with wood, and his great oxen, as a Spanish procession of the first class arranged in my honour. The driver, a tall dark fellow, in tightly-fitting striped clothes, was bare-headed and barefoot; his left hand rested upon the projecting pole of the waggon, and in the other he flourished a long whip, which he smacked bravely, describing varied figures with it in mid-air. Behind him walked the ponderous oxen. They are so notably big and clumsy that, when you see them halting before an inn where the driver has some business, you examine them intently to see whether there is any visible movement in their massive bodies. Their eyes cannot be

seen; they lie hidden beneath a rough tangle of hair, which hangs down from their foreheads and is pierced by two great fierce, twisted horns. From their wide nostrils ascends a hot and visible breath. The broad, heavy rump rests upon short legs and wide hoofs; and the stone-coloured immobility of the whole reminds you of the beast-gods of Egypt.

Now, however, this mass moved cautiously, step by step, behind its whip-smacking driver; and the heavily-laden waggon, with its quivering laths and great overhanging branches of trees, imparted to it a length of proportion and beauty of movement which made me, after it had passed, continue to follow it with my gaze as an image of Spain herself—slow, proud, and stately.

Meanwhile it was time to break our fast, and we went downstairs to the dining-room, which had "*Comedor*" painted in big letters on the door. A large room, panelled in dark oak, with all the shutters closed against the universal enemy, the sun. We carefully opened one or two of these to examine our table, but there was nothing to be seen on it. In a few minutes the door opened, and two girls of almost the same height, sisters perhaps, entered, bowed, and with a pleasant smile wished us: "*Buenos dias!*" On the flat palms of their outstretched hands they carried a little tray for each of our party, set these down upon the bare but brilliantly polished table, and after giving us a glance from their dark pupils, as if to ask whether there were anything more that we required, they left the room as proudly as they had entered it. We looked at each other in triumph, as though we had discovered America.

"We are there at last," cried Erens; "this is

Spain. Have you ever seen such brilliant black hair, so finely dressed, with those flowers atop? and what wonderful black eyes, eh? and that charming costume made of nothing at all."

To my eyes those girls with their manners so full

of style, their comely movements and light dresses, looked like two of Flaxman's figures imbued with colour and life. But we began to grow curious to know what manner of food our goddesses had set before us; we examined it like little dogs sniffing at their dinner, for we had no notion of what it consisted. It looked dainty and picturesque, but it needed

inspection and cataloguing. First we each carefully drew forward a cup of chocolate, not very large, but deliciously fragrant. Next came a large glass of water, clear as crystal, and containing something that looked like a folded lace handkerchief. "In the water!" we laughed; but we soon saw that it was an *azucarillo*, a very thin, transparent, sweet wafer, that stuck out high above the water, stood upright for a while, but was at last dissolved in the crystal fluid. And, as I live, there was also a little piece of bread for each of us, rather small, rather hard, but that was doubtless correct; and, on a very tiny dish, a little piece of butter, which here bears the pastoral name of *manteca de la vaca*. And, finally, beneath all this lay a dear little napkin, not intended to be laid on the table, or even on the lap, but to be pressed from time to time, folded as it was, to the lips, when one felt the need for it. It seemed to us a real doll's breakfast; and yet when we had consumed and enjoyed it all, we felt both fortified and refreshed.

We were now quite ready to start on our first Spanish walk, but when my son had reached the threshold he could not move a step. With eager eyes he stared at a placard posted upon the wall of our hotel. He called to us, and we saw a great poster printed in red, black, and yellow letters, interspersed with pictures of many bulls; the border consisted of dancing girls, carrying great fans, and executing curious steps. Above all we read:

"*PLAZA DE TOROS: FIESTAS DEL DOMINGO.*"

Picture the joy of our triumvirate at dropping straight into a bull-fight; but we did not feel sure of

our ground, and the *patrono* was sent for to tell us what we were to do to attend this performance. We heard the good fat man come shuffling along in the distance; but when he heard what we wanted, all the thick folds of his brown face creased into laughter, his eyes were squeezed out of sight, and his broad mouth displayed all its vacancies and shortcomings.

"*Bendito me!*" he exclaimed, laughing at our eager questioning. "It's only a Sunday diversion; youth will tease and dance. *Si, si, señores:* go by all means; no harm will happen to man or beast; the girls and the bulls are all *novillos*, and if the little old gentleman"—here he laughed and pinched my arm —"does not become too lively, the *señores* can venture upon a dance with the little ladies of Viscaya."

We did not understand a word of it! A dance and bull-fight combined! In any case, thought we, the less we understand the earlier we ought to go.

The *plaza de toros* was soon found. The arena was a stone circus, with no attempt at luxury; the first thing that struck us was the delightful piece of blue sky encircled by the great round line of the roofless building. The performance had not yet commenced, and the vast space was filled with young scamps playing at bull and bull-fighters. They climbed and clambered over the enclosure in every direction, jostled and chased each other, and raised loud cries and clouds of dust.

Suddenly a trumpet uttered a hideous blare, and the little bull rushed into the arena. The frightened lads fled, and only a few remained in the circle, young *picadores*, *banderilleros* and *espadas*, and amateurs of all kinds. For a moment we held our breath.

Although we knew that there was no danger, this leap into the midst of the romping boys gave us a thrill; but all went well. Now it grew delightful to watch the young bull trotting to and fro, threatening, shaking his head at the red flags and other objects held before his eyes, and to see the bull-fighters springing and gliding around him, avoiding his dangerous horns, which were already of formidable dimensions.

It was droll to see the bull rushing at a young fellow whom he felt certain of transpiercing, and who suddenly vanished from his sight by leaping nimbly over the nearest fence. For us three from the North it was strange and entertaining: the clear blue sky, the great slice of sunshine, and the delightful piece of shade where we sat; the merry brown faces of men and women, who threw each other oranges, fans, and cigars. All was light, noise, and gaiety.

But now bright dance-music sounded from above, a sign that the bull had been driven back to his stable, and that the dancing was commencing. Following the crowd, we quickly made our way through the labyrinth of this Spanish building, until we came to another great roofless space, arranged as a ball- and refreshment-room, where, as we say in Holland, a blind horse could do no damage. But the living furniture which decorated this bare space was young and active; boys and girls, the latter carrying fans, with nosegays in their hair, or a single rose upon their breast. They were dressed in light silk frocks, of colours which we, at home, would call showy, but which, in this land of glaring sunshine, harmonized with all the rest, with the glancing, black, carefully-dressed hair, with the black, deep-set eyes. And they danced, they danced, as though putting sentiment into it; now with their heads on one side, now on the other, casting their eyes up, casting them down, with a laugh which roused admiration for their beautiful teeth and displayed the passion lurking in their maiden bosoms. But the boys, no! With cigarette in mouth, the little hat worn upon one ear, it was as though they were quite indifferent at encircling the girls' waists and twirling round with them. From time to time they cracked out the measure of the music between their thumb and forefinger, and stamped upon the floor till it groaned. A moment's interval; the girls ranged themselves along the bench that lined the wall, and their cavaliers came up with refreshments. They drank limpid water out of tumblers, together with very small glasses of anisette, combining freshness and warmth; and we ourselves thought nothing more

pleasant than this form of refreshment, which is general throughout Spain.

They danced for an hour or so; then the bugle gave the signal for the fight again, to be once more replaced by the dancing. And in this way the youthful population of San Sebastian kept its Sunday, alternating the dangers of the bull-fight with the yet greater perils of the ball-room.

BURGOS

WE did not want to go straight to the centre of Spain and to the great city of Madrid. We wished first to breathe more Spanish air, to tread more Spanish ground; and the old town of Burgos lay upon the road. We left pleasant San Sebastian after a few

days' stay, and armed, like real Spanish travellers, with long walking-sticks, clad in easy travelling-suits, we drove off to our place of destination.

A few hours' journey brought us to a region very different from that which we had left behind us. The air was chilly, the wind harsh; on every side lay a landscape of stony hills and steep precipices, with here and there deep caverns, which were pressed like great dark eyes into the grey rock. The hard, sharp lines of the mountains stood out against the grey sky like ruined castles and towers; sometimes like the backs of monstrous beasts. Where the line swept downwards, other mountains raised their peaks far beyond in the distance, and others again behind those; beneath the long grey layers of clouds, the barren landscape displayed wild and inhospitable extents: a back-ground for a demonic tragedy.

At last the heavy masses of rock are pierced by tunnels, another and yet another, and then we obtain a view over the classic Ebro. After this long journey the aspect changes; great and splendid trees line the river, which flows curving through a green landscape. As we pass through the little towns of Miranda and Pancorbo we enjoy a strangely beautiful panorama, until again we reach the barren moors amid which Burgos is placed.

A great disillusionment awaits the stranger entering one of these old Spanish towns. Everything is tumbled and confused. The station, the officials, the population; all seem ragged and slovenly; and in each town you have the satisfaction of being visited by the customs anew.

A low-roofed and oscillating vehicle was pointed

out to us by a beggar as the omnibus belonging to our hotel. It was evening, and we saw little of the almost unlighted town. At last we crossed some bridges, drove down a street, and stopped. We stepped out and looked out for the hotel. We had already learnt that the guest at a Spanish *fonda* is received in a strange and unceremonious manner; but this surpassed our worst expectations. A small lantern burnt within a large stable-door: this was the entrance to the best hotel at Burgos. Upon the ground-floor a smell of stables greeted us in every direction. A wide winding-stair of rough wood, which creaked beneath our feet, brought us to the hotel proper, which was built in a circular form above the stables. Here were our rooms: they were furnished with excessive plainness, but were spacious, and had large windows overlooking the street. Although we had not seen the landlord, head-waiter or any one in office, we soon felt at home, once more through the obligingness of the chambermaids, who made every endeavour to elicit from us what we needed, and who amused us greatly by their free and merry bewilderment at our ways and language. Very much pleasanter than in the big European hotels, where a flood of servants rushes down upon you at your arrival, as though you were the king himself, only to leave you utterly to yourself so soon as you are safely landed at the numbered door of your room. Here you have no number: you become the child of the house at once; they come into your room without knocking. We arranged everything with the girls: what we should have to eat, what we required, and I do not remember ever being put so thoroughly at my ease in a couple of hours as in this horsy hotel.

But suddenly a misfortune struck us, the worst that can befall a traveller: Erens fell ill. Already in the rocking omnibus he had felt unwell; he had been silent and peevish. During our installation at the hotel he had made an effort; but now that everything was in order, he collapsed and had to be put to bed at once. Sore throat, headache, fever, and general exhaustion.

Marietta, the elder of the *señoritas*, came in and perceived our distress.

"*Pobre señor*," she said, bending over the sick man, "may I give you a piece of advice? I have an old aunt who has all sorts of ailments, and when they become very bad she takes a sovereign remedy. I will prepare it for you. She takes a good bottle of Val de Peñas, adds a handful of Spanish pepper, boils it all up into a delicious drink, and the next day she feels better than she ever did in her life."

The sufferer and we others had for the moment no resource but to accept her suggestion; and the three of us drank her strong brew until we were in such a sleepy condition that my son and I also made our way to bed. I slept soundly, but was suddenly aroused by a prolonged flourish of trumpets, which sounded delightfully through the air. We were housed just opposite a cavalry barracks; I looked out and saw ten troopers blowing the reveille in the fresh morning-air. I left my room on tiptoe, and when I came to our sick friend's apartment, found my son standing by his bedside.

Erens was worse, and complained of how the strong wine and Spanish pepper had tortured his aching head and limbs. A doctor must be sent for,

quickly, at once. Fortunately the man came round without delay. It was not the Spanish Æsculapius of the *Barbiere*, in a long mantle and shovel hat. Simply and without ceremony he went up to the patient, looked at him, sounded him all over. He explained that he talked nothing but Spanish, not even Latin; and when he saw that the mysteries of the Spanish pharmacopæia were Greek to us, he went away saying, "*Limpiadura, limpiadura.*" We knew that this meant, "I must clean him out," but had no idea what he would do next. Presently, however, he returned with two bottles, one big and dark, the other small and light. He told us very slowly and clearly how we were to administer these remedies to the sufferer, and departed after assuring us of his speedy return and of his care for our patient's condition. Oh, dearest and best of doctors, how well you treated us! In three days our man was as sound as a chicken, and the doctor's bill was nowhere to be found. Only, among our hotel expenses we found an item of twenty-five francs paid to Señor Salva. That was the medico's fee for his constant attention and pains during three days.

Once more we walked well and strong through the streets of Burgos. The great flood of sunshine, the very great flood of sunshine, was what struck us most when we issued from the dark stable-portals of our *fonda*. Up with the sunshades, out with the blue spectacles, down with our hats over our eyes. What sunshine, what light! When we had walked for half-an-hour it became better, and we gradually grew accustomed to the light and shadow and the brightness on every side. The great market, where everything

was offered for sale, glittered with sunlight, which made each object glance and gleam; then through a little dark-shadowed street to the eminence from which you see the road leading to the chief glory of Burgos, the great, all-belittling Cathedral; for in reality the whole of Burgos is only built as a setting to this wondrous edifice, erected at a time when humanity counted for nothing, and the church for everything.

If you go from the Plaza Mayor, the great market-place, straight through streets and lanes to the Cathedral, you see nothing of the stately building, surrounded as it is by small houses and low walls. We therefore went, as our doctor had advised us, along a back street, until we reached a sandy eminence. Here the sun burned so brightly that there was neither man nor beast in sight: but the proud edifice stood right before us. It was wonderful to see how paltry the surrounding city looked, and how the tall and richly-ornamented towers of the Cathedral rose up into the air. We descended the rough hill-side, and entered through the principal door. Here all was in shade, as opposed to the sun outside; all was cool, as opposed to the heat on the mount; all was dignified and splendid, as against the bareness and poverty we had just seen. The tall and solemn pillars stood side by side, supporting the glorious vault, which was full of delightful lines and ornaments. You do not know what to admire first; the impression is one of overwhelming brilliancy. In the days when churches as this were built, they were the places where everything was collected: the church was the museum, the archives, the place for monuments and memorials to saints

and princes long since dead. Alas! who now is interested in these vanished and mostly insignificant grandeurs?

We halted at one of the most beautiful chapels. Here stood a young monk, with a head shaven save for a fringe of jet-black hair, who had at once marked us as strangers. He was barefooted and wore a thick brown gown, which left his broad neck bare; his eyes were black and deep-set. He saluted us and pointed to a bunch of keys hanging from his girdle, to show that he could admit us to all the reliquaries, open the gates of the private oratories, and lead the way through this, to us, labyrinthine splendour. He showed us everything: the historic tombs beneath our feet and the curious statues high above our heads; he unlocked the gilt gates surrounding marble monuments; he opened chapels where mass was said on rare occasions alone. He drew aside the curtains that hung before glorious pictures, and lit tapers in odd corners to display to us the marvels of decoration. We thus wandered with our spiritual director from one side of the church to the other, climbed up into the admirably sculptured choir, and down the steps leading to a gloomy vault. We asked him whether this office was not a little monotonous for him at his age; but he assured us emphatically that he valued above all things the right to live and die amid those pious surroundings. He had the sacred conviction—and we felt that he was sincere—that there was no peace for those who were not good Catholics, and that we can only be reconciled to our earthly existence by devotion to Catholic belief. We allowed the man to make his confession of faith in peace: why vex

him with questions? We each handed him a peseta, and he thanked us kindly.

The sun, the great broad daylight, brought us back to our every-day travellers' mood. We laughed and romped when we felt the cobble-stones of Burgos beneath our feet again, and we helped a donkey-driver to drive his beasts, whipping and shouting, through the narrow, winding streets. We went up the Espelon, a delightful walk, admired the exotic plants growing by the roadside, and amused ourselves by watching the brown-skinned, gaily-dressed nurse-maids, who walk up and down chattering, accompanied by their many charges. We went into cafés, which were already crammed at the early hour of noon, and watched the crowd of people playing cards and dominoes amid a choking cloud of cigarette smoke.

A foot-path paved with cobbles, all slippery with weeds and moss, was our road to an adjacent and famous monastery. We knew nothing pleasanter than to wander about in this strange land without a guide; and as there was no house or hovel of any kind to block the view, we were able to see the old building far in the distance.

Through a somewhat ruined gate we entered a walled court-yard. Within the walls was a great neglected space, overgrown with tall weeds, with an irregular ground covered with stones and bushes. In front of us was a large building, the entrance to which was closed by a tall and handsomely-carved door. Here, on the marble step, sat a wretched object of picturesque misery. From a heap of rags and tatters appeared a finely-chiselled woman's head, surrounded by heavy black tresses; in her brown arms she held a

pale and emaciated baby, which she pressed to her bared breast. She sat motionless, as though she were dreaming and had not perceived us; but when we approached, she stood up, lifted the great door-knocker, and sank down again in her seat, awaiting the centimes which she looks to receiving for this service shown to visitors to the monastery.

We had not much time in which to study the dark brown tints and naked poverty of this Spanish beggar-woman, for upon the threshold appeared the tall figure of a monk dressed in a white cloth gown, with a shaven head and bare feet. We asked if we had leave to enter. No reply came. Bowing his clean-shaven head to the ground, he pointed indoors, and gave us the signal to enter. The door was locked behind us, and all was still, still as the grave.

The first place we entered was a large oratory, and a figure in every way resembling that of the man who had admitted us lay upon the ground, with his face upon the first step of the altar. He made no movement; he seemed sunk in adoration, and did not apparently perceive that anything in the world was stirring about him. By his side sat another white figure, which appeared to be reading and praying from a book. We asked him if he could show us over the monastery, but no sound came from his lips. He too bowed his clean-shaven head to the ground, and with a meaning gesture pressed his index finger to his mouth; we then understood that we had entered a monastery in which the human voice may not be heard, in which even prayers must be muttered almost silently. Nothing is allowed to divert the attention of those who have withdrawn from the world into this

chilly tomb. We stole almost soundlessly, upon tip-toe, through the monastery, the garden, enriched with a well surrounded by a handsome wrought-iron railing, and the cloisters. Here and there sat a white figure

with a book, in a careful and submissive attitude; others knelt in positions of silent meditation, or with arms wide-stretched, or embracing a marble image between their folded hands. Not a sound was heard; nothing broke the silence save the swing of the pen-

dulum of a great clock, whose vibration sounded through the stillness and drew attention to itself as the only audible object, announcing, amid its dumb surroundings, the passage of time into eternity. At the entrance-door stood a great alms-box, and we willingly offered our contribution to the support of these men deprived of their share of the joy of life.

The next day we left for Madrid.

MADRID

MADRID is a charmingly bright and spacious capital, and when the sun shines, or the moon stands high in the heavens, it is a real pleasure to stroll through the wide streets, full of shops, cafés, and sights of all kinds. Of parks laid out with broad

paths and rich plantations there are many. Cabs, omnibuses and many splendid carriages give a brisk and joyous movement to the town.

Madrid's most characteristic hour is the night-time. It never seems to sleep. The Puerta del Sol is full of people walking and arguing until two or three in the morning. Newspapers, refreshments, lottery-tickets, ballads are hawked for sale with loud voices, and none seems to retire to rest till the morning-star rises in the firmament.

Our first morning in Madrid found all three of us quite early in the breakfast-room, without prearrangement; we almost grudged the time necessary to take our breakfasts. The mighty figure of Velasquez de Silva, which was to be displayed to us in the Museo del Prado, had roused us early from sleep. We dashed through the streets of Madrid, as though they contained nothing for the stranger to see or remark. Hot and tired, we arrived before the big building, where, to cool our appetite for Spanish pictures, we found a tall attendant in livery, who pointed to the *annuncio* on the wall, from which we learnt not to be in so great a hurry in Madrid. We had the privilege of waiting an hour, a whole hour. So we strolled in the surrounding park; for this museum enjoys the advantage of standing amidst charming walks and trees, and cool benches of grey stone are dotted all around. I stretched myself at length on one of these delightful seats. With my head thrown back, I saw that the sky in Madrid is almost as beautiful as at the Hague; I saw all there was to see, and dreamt of much more, when they came and roused me from my strange attitude and reverie: the doors were opened!

We ran up a broad and lofty marble staircase, across a wide landing, through a great doorway, and found ourselves in the place of our desires. The museum at Madrid is spacious, pleasant, and homely. There is no ostentatiousness of splendid furniture or display; yet it is proud and princely. Everything is easy and comfortable; there are no iron rails to keep you at a distance; you can stand with your nose against the pictures if you wish, or examine them through the glass if you are so disposed; there is no maddening varnish; there is plenty of light, admitted by windows which are wide, but not too wide. The guardians and attendants appeared to me to have an instinct regarding the nature of the visitors to the museum. They were going round with a little troop of peasants, men and women, who had come sight-seeing, and took care that these did not interfere with the other people who were examining the pictures more closely. They were always able to distinguish between the artists and the genuine art-lovers — critics and persons who took an interest in what they saw—and the ordinary tourists who trotted through the rooms with their check suits and red guide-books. When they saw that I returned frequently to the same painting and discussed it with my companions, they always brought me a chair; they informed me where my friends were, whenever we had lost each other in the eagerness of our inspection; and I verily believe that, if I had felt at all faint from excess of walking and looking, they would have brought me a little table laid with lunch.

But happily there was no question of feeling faint; the excitement was much too great for that. We fell

like gluttons upon the first small room, for we saw a Velasquez hanging there, and to go straight through to the big room which really commences the museum was impossible: how could we pass by that picture of which we had caught sight through the narrow doorway of the small room. "Look," we said, nudging each other with our elbows, "there he is!" A delicious landscape with a fine blue sky traversed with faint stripes; across it rode a young Spanish prince, in an exquisite dress, upon a grand little brown, lively horse. I thought the horse the finest, my son the prince, Erens the landscape. We laughed with joy, and then quickly flew out of the small room, through the big door. Look! A great lofty, spacious room, with Velasquez, Murillos, Titians, Raphaels hanging on every wall, but Velasquez most of all.

"This way," said my son, "over there, see, there is the famous Surrender of Breda."

"No," said I, "look there, there is that splendid portrait of Olivarez on horseback, and another next to it, and another, portraits of three Court jesters, and a great interior with princesses with Velasquez hair. What a splendid dog that is on the floor; how well he knew how to paint animals, horses, dogs, monkeys, as though there were nothing in it; and then those skies, and that simple way of painting: deuce take me, but he didn't gain his reputation for nothing!"

But one of the attendants, observing our noisy enthusiasm for Velasquez, pointed to a door a little further on and leading to another room. It was impossible for us to enter this room without all three, as though upon the word of command, taking off our hats, such was the air of grandeur, such the harmony

of beauty that met us there. We grasped the attendant's meaning: here hung three, four, five of the Spanish artist's finest works. In the middle of the room was the Tapestry Weavers, and opposite that, the Topers, the latter strong and brown, painted hard, and full of character; the other soft, refined, sweet and sympathetic. In the *Hilanderas*, or Tapestry Weavers, the principal figure is a big, handsome woman, with a bare neck, fair hair, bare arms; she is busy doing her work; it might almost be a life-size Terburg, with more style, it is true, more breadth, but the colour is there, the charm, with all that melting sweetness, that blonde deliciousness. But see, further down the room a life-size fellow stands talking: it is a Court jester; he has, I think, a piece of paper in his hand, and he is reciting. Yes, that's what he's doing. Just look how life-like he stands, stretching out his hand to illustrate his speech with his gestures. It is broad, big, vivacious: I had never seen anything like it.

Velasquez is the painter who most resembles the painter one imagines when one is very young. A large canvas, broad brushes and pencils; and with a lusty hand he paints a man on a horse, life-size, in a sumptuous landscape, with a blue sky and fleecy clouds. Clad in a loose-fitting suit of brown velvet, with black mustachios and deep-set eyes, he stands with expert hand filling his great canvas with life-size figures. He does not draw learnedly, or precisely, but largely and boldly; he does not seek or worm about, does not hurl brushes and chairs about in despair, but paints earnestly and deliberately. Full of love for his creations, he sits down to rest for a moment from his strenuous work, and carefully studies the model standing before him,

resting, he too, from his pose as a trumpeter. Then the painter gets up again, to work on steadily and peacefully, standing on his feet, until he is interrupted by the visit of some courtiers, perhaps of the King himself, who delightedly admire his work, full-coloured, clear and distinct.

Quel peintre et quel talent! And we stand and try to realize how such a man must have felt in such an environment, we painters without daring, without models, without Court, King or Kaiser, to give us a sense of breadth. A little picture less than two yards square terrifies us, and the King is mightily amused at what we show him at an exhibition of living masters, and we creep in our shells and are painters of the doubting age and of joyless actions.

Reflection had ceased with us; at that moment we refused to grant that every age produces a different art and different artists, and that each utterance of art has a right of existence. Ah, we could not help being shocked, yes, shattered, by the sight of so many masterpieces. We longed for the outside air; we had had emotions enough; we wanted to run, romp, drive. We looked at no more pictures that day.

KERMESSE

IN the immediate vicinity of Madrid lies a glorious plain, which forms a valley between Madrid and the neighbouring hills. Leaving the town, you descend gradually along the picturesque, tree-lined road; and when you reach the bottom, you find yourself surrounded and hemmed in by a circle of richly-wooded grounds and hills. Above all you see, from out the declivity, the whole city of Madrid rising with its tall buildings and low, its steeples, churches, and palaces. In this valley they kept the feast of Saint Isodore.

It was really a country-fair or Kermesse: a long double row of loosely-carpentered booths, whose canvas coverings flapped lustily in the wind. There were bazaars where wonderful wares were offered for sale, working figures of bull-fights, dolls that danced and played the drum, mountains and landscapes made of sugar-stuff. Then there were booths in which they cooked and baked, spreading an odour of reeking viands. Dogs and a multitude of children ran eagerly sniffing around. But the principal space in the green plain was occupied by the festive dancers, who filliped their thumbs and fingers in the Spanish fashion, and stamped their feet to the measure of a tinkling guitar or tambourine.

Before we could reach the dancers, we were encountered by a group of *gitanas*, or screaming gipsy-women. Their iron-grey hair streamed from their heads, mingled with rags of every description; their skin was brown and hard as wood; and had we not known better, we should have thought that they meant to swallow us up, flesh and bones, so spiteful was their grin, so hungrily did they stare at us with their jet-black eyes and thick eye-brows, and stretch out to us their brown and sinewy hands. One of these bewitching dames seized me by the hand, and, in a language of which I understood not a word, with great gestures she described the secrets that lay hidden in the lines of my hand. Fortunately we soon escaped this rough society by the payment of some small coins, and pushed through the rows of bystanders to watch a dancer who, on that splendid green carpet, was executing a dance which charmed me more than any I had ever seen.

Clad in an olive-green silk dress, which fell in graceful folds around her slender limbs, wearing a light flowered kerchief about her bare neck and bosom—the latter was adorned with a red rose—she set her little satin-shod feet daintily and proudly upon the ground. But she did not dance with her feet alone; her whole body, her head, her eyes above all, danced too. Her partner was a lad of fifteen or sixteen, her brother perhaps, whom she seemed to employ to lend help and support to her movements as she danced upon the sward. Sometimes she would bow low as she embraced him with tender passion, and then again she raised her little head, adorned with her gleaming hair, on high, as though calling upon Heaven to bear witness to her exalted sentiments. I may have stood admiring her a little obviously. At least she gave me a mysterious glance now and again from her soft, black eyes, and it seemed to me that she bent her head towards me, as though to say, "Come and join me, and I will let this boy go his way." O vain self-deception of an old man! Scarcely had I made this observation, when, with a graceful swirl, she swung round to the other side and repeated the same alluring gestures to the people opposite. Clearly, she was inspired by no desire for conquest; she danced for dancing's sake, and to give free play to her love of gesture and movement. In the north we should regard such ways as signifying something very different; here they displayed the nature of this Spanish girl, who felt the need of motion, of graceful poses, and nothing more.

"Look behind you," said my son; and when I turned round, as I live, I thought I beheld two living statues on horseback, two pompous figures in the form

of *alguaçils*, policemen, seated upon tall horses. Clad like Napoleon in the pictures of Waterloo, with the famous cocked hat and the coat with upturned lapels, white breeches and jack-boots, they sat straight as candles upon their grey steeds, and overlooked the crowd of humanity as it were a sea raging about them. The movement and excitement around us increased; fatigued, we sought a resting-place beneath a canvas stretched across four poles and sheltering a rustic table and a long bench. Everything about us sang, danced, twanged the guitar; we drank a glass of Manzanilla, and imagined that we were taking part in the general riot of fun and frolic.

It began to grow late. Madrid in the distance, with its houses and steeples, was now but a dark mass, sharply defined against the deep blue of the summer evening sky, through which floated golden streaks with glowing edges. The revelry seemed to be but just commencing. Here and there gleamed little lights from tents and booths; from out the darkness incessantly loomed couples, laughing and romping. Thinking that we had worshipped long enough at the shrine of Saint Isodore, we climbed the steep foot-path to the city, past the Prado and the parks, and safely reached our *fonda* in the more than lively Puerta del Sol.

THE PRADO RE-VISITED

THE next morning our desire for the Museo del Prado was renewed. We wanted to see fresh masterpieces; the Prado contains a wondrous wealth of beautiful things. No sooner had we entered the long room, discussing the merits of the robust Ribera, than a young man, armed with palette and pencil, climbed down from a tall ladder, on which he was seated copying one of the pictures, and came up to us.

"I hope you will forgive me," he said, "but I could not stay up there when I heard you talking Dutch. May I introduce myself? I had heard that you intended to visit Spain, and I am delighted to think I may be of some service to you here."

It was Mr. Govaerts, a talented young artist, who had won the prize at our painting-academy in Amsterdam, and was now travelling in Italy and Spain at the cost of the Government. I could not but remember how eagerly I too, in my youth, had longed for such a prize; how I envied the blissful fate of some of my French friends who, young, healthy, full of hope and courage, were enabled, with no anxiety regarding their livelihood, to spend five years in a Roman villa in glorious sunny Italy. Yet I too had been favoured by fortune, as I stood here, although I had never won an academy prize.

We were on the point of entering another room, when once again a heavy, distinguished figure came up to me, bowing politely.

"*Quel bonheur, cher maître, de vous retrouver dans une si belle collection!*" its owner cried. It was a French art-critic, who had once called upon me at the Hague, and who had proved to me that there are some art-critics who do know something of their subject, who do not pretend to know more than the artists themselves, and who can combine erudition with simple susceptibility.

"*Eh bien!*" said my French friend. "Was I exaggerating when I talked to you about the glorious Velasquez?"

Erens pointed out that it was the fashion lately to place Velasquez above Rembrandt.

"That is true," I replied, "I have heard it said; but I think the opinion frivolous. For, although Velasquez is an exceptional painter, so is Rembrandt, and he is much more besides. If Rembrandt had never taken a brush in hand, his etchings alone would have placed him among the foremost creative artists. The excellence of his talent as a painter is but a small portion of all that combines to form the enormous genius of this jewel with its many facets, his imagination, his simplicity, the poetry of his sombre, mysterious effects, the depth and virtuosity of his workmanship. Velasquez never painted heads like the *Staalmeesters*. The hair lives, the eyes look at you, the foreheads wrinkle at you. This is my first visit to Madrid, and I rejoice at being able to enjoy this, to me, new talent of Velasquez. But when I look at his masterpiece, *Las Lanzas*, and think of Rembrandt's Night Watch,

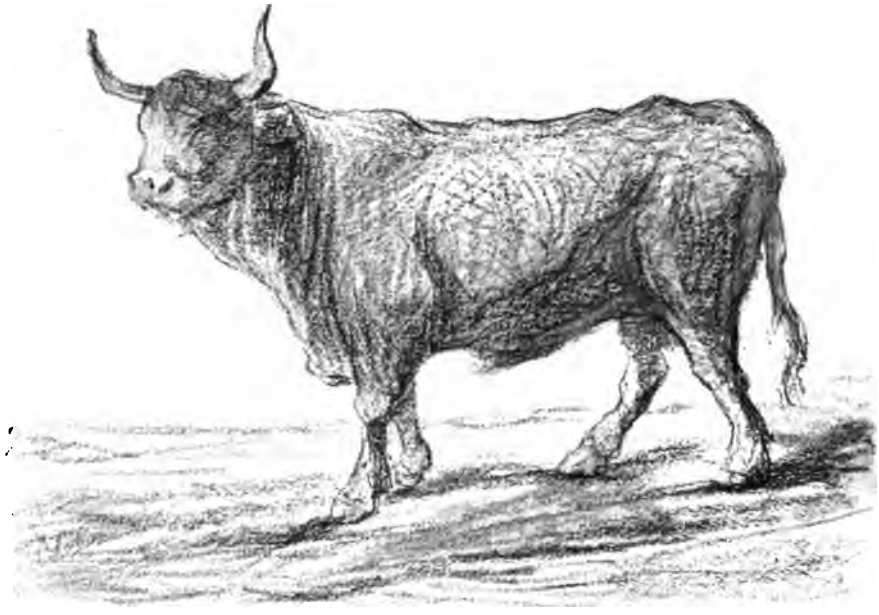
I continue to regard the Spanish *chef-d'œuvre* with the greatest appreciation and delight, but in my thoughts I fall back before the Night Watch as before a miracle. There you have a breadth of brush that no one has ever equalled. All of which painting is capable is united in that: fidelity to nature and phantasy, the loftiest masterliness of execution, and in addition a sorcery of light and shadow that is all his own. Rembrandt's was an unique mind, in which the mystic poetry of the North was combined with the warmth and virtuosity of the South. Velasquez' work, on the other hand, glows calmly and peacefully from these glorious walls. He works, but does not contend; he feels gloriously, but wages no combat; Rembrandt's gloomy silence in darkness, his striving after the infinite and the inexplicable, are unknown to him; serene and sure he sits enthroned upon the high place which he has made his, but Velasquez' art embraces only his own surroundings, whereas Rembrandt's plays its part in every human life, and in addition strives after the historic and the unseen."

My Frenchman took from his wallet an exquisite box filled with chocolate, which he explained that he always required when visiting a picture-gallery. He begged me to help myself, saying, "*Vous vous êtes échauffé, ça vous fera du bien;*" then politely leading me forwards, he took me by the hand, and suddenly paused before a portrait of a cardinal, painted by none less than Raphael. Once again I stood open-mouthed and rooted to the spot; they brought me a chair, and I was able to contemplate this modern masterpiece at my ease. I call it a modern masterpiece, for this

portrait must give every one the impression of being painted for all time. You are not struck, charmed, and delighted by picturesqueness or artisticity, but by the thoughtfulness, the soul, the innate character of the man. A rare soberness of light and colouring, a triumphant nobility of form. It is a tall figure, and a face eloquent of asceticism and acquiescence. The eyes are deep-set and penetrating; the sallow pallor of the hollow cheek reveal the man of the cloister and the Church. The fine, hooked nose betrays a proud Italian descent; the lips, slightly compressed, a reflective and gentle character. This one portrait contains more poetry than many a surrounding display of saints and angels.

These saints, madonnas, and angels are here in multitudes; the titles commencing with *La Virgen* are innumerable. If the portraying upon canvas of the historic figures of Christendom were a new idea, I believe that, in a museum where, among other masterpieces, hung a picture representing Mary, prostrate on the ground, casting herself with tears of despair into the arms of the women her companions, with behind the group the Cross, rising on high, with the noble Son looking down, with bent head, upon His Mother—I believe that the emotion produced by such a scene would kill every surrounding picture. But when this beautiful subject is repeated hundreds and hundreds of times, when it is used, so to speak, as a sign-board of religious establishments, when, as at the Prado, you see before you rooms full of such subjects, painted more or less well, then you require all your sense of artistic equity to continue to bestow your attention upon them. And thus we wandered by a great number

of valuable pictures, and clearly perceived that this too contributed to promoting the great victory of Velasquez in this museum, for his religious pictures are very much in the minority here. We again and yet again saluted the master of these fortunate gifts, and through the sunny park made our way home.



THE BULL-FIGHT

ON the square of the Puerta del Sol and in the Calle del Alcala all was uproar. Coachmen shouted and drove past one another. Omnibuses, horsed with mules, were each moment stormed by young and old. Anything to get on. All hurried and hustled to reach the Plaza de Toros, at the end of the Calle del Alcala, where the great bull-fight was to take place that Sunday. The passengers were chased along the street by newspaper-boys, who sold coloured prints of bulls and bull-fighters. A heathenish noise reigned throughout the long street to the place where the arena stood.

Here all was bustle and confusion; one was hunted from one entrance to the other; and here too the big, motionless alguazils sat surveying the swaying crowd from the backs of their tall steeds. Thousands and thousands of pleasure-seekers like ourselves stormed the different entrances of the building. At last, with much pushing, and with great danger to hats and glasses, we made our way in.

Again that splendid sight of the great round curve, through which, from out of the pure blue sky, the sun casts the huge line of shadow which envelops half the building. All was crush, merry talk, searching for seats, climbing from one stage to the other, throwing of oranges from the arena upwards, of coins and paper money from above. All with the indispensable cigarette in their mouths, heaps of Spaniards stood discussing the programme with big gestures, and thousands of laughing, gaily-dressed *señoritas* waved their fans, never fast enough to keep off the heat. At last I saw that something special had taken place. The city authorities had entered their box, every one flew to his seat, and the music commenced.

The music continued, and now in solemn procession came the participators in the fight, picturesquely dressed in embroidered coats, silk knee-breeches, silk stockings, and low shoes. Some on horseback, armed with lances; others with red cloaks swinging from their shoulders or hanging over one arm. It was like a bridal party in brilliant costume. Each struck an attitude before the *Alcalde* of the city. The *espada*, the leader of the troop, bowed to the authorities and to the shouting multitude, and flung his velvet hat high in the air; then the signal resounded, a strident

trumpet-blast, and the first bull stormed into the arena.

Nothing but a bull-fight can give you such a moment of sensation. You hold your breath, struck by the aspect of the fierce monster as he leaps through the opening. He holds his tremendous head, with its horns, ready, but is at first confused by all that presents itself before him in this brilliant space. Impatiently he stamps his hoofs. Yonder he sees an attainable something: it is a man waving a red cloth; he rushes towards it, the figure flies before him, he comes up with it and dashes his head against the fragile body; no, the shock only touches the red cloth, the man has nimbly sprung aside. But another presents himself, and yet another; madly he rushes first at one, then at the other; but he only reaches the red cloths, and all bewildered he finds himself standing before a man on horseback. This is the picador. A thrust from his lance enrages the bull still more; the foam pours from his mouth as from a tap; and then, generally with a single movement, he throws horse and horseman with a thud to the ground. The picador's position is far from enviable; he lies beneath the horse, and above him he sees the glowing eyes of the bull, who aims his horns at him; but the surrounding bull-fighters now press about the beast, and try to draw him away from his prey with their red cloths, a stratagem which nearly always succeeds, although the picador generally comes out of this encounter limping and wounded, the horse covered with blood.

The bull pants and roars, looking out for something to bore with his horns; see, just in the middle of the arena stands a small slight figure, charmingly

dressed in satin. It lifts its two arms on high, and defies the bull to approach; in each hand it holds a long stick from which little flags wave gaily in the wind; the sticks are furnished with treacherous iron points. The bull rushes at the *banderillero*, who at that moment thrusts the points of the little flag-sticks in his neck, and the bull rushes on, a flag planted in each side of his broad neck. A deafening applause, shouting, throwing of hats and cigarettes follows on this exploit; madly the bull shakes from side to side, but cannot rid himself of the flags. He stands still, panting for breath, and a second, perhaps a third, *banderillero* approaches. But now it is sufficient; the decisive moment has come.

Bareheaded, the *espada* draws nigh; in his left hand he carries a red cloak, in his right a sword. Cool and calm, he walks up to the raging monster, who suddenly stands still, stares long at his assailant, frightened at the man who dares threaten him so calmly. The *espada* comes closer and closer to the bull, stands right before him, and strikes him repeatedly over the head with his red cloak; then he takes a step backwards, in order to aim, with the point of his sword, at the exact spot in which to hit the beast. The bull on his side too awaits the precise moment, and just when his tremendous head is bent down to impale the intrepid one upon its horns, the *espada's* sword plunges deep into his neck. All the ten thousand spectators spring up, stare, shout, push against each other; one yells, another whistles; for a moment pandemonium reigns. But see, the bull gets up again; with the sword in his back he trots down the arena, all the *chulos* and the *espada* after him, to

draw out the sword if necessary. But at last the tremendous one falls upon his knees; he has no longer the strength to lift his horned head; his might is gone, and the glorious beast, who but now rushed proudly and defiantly into the arena, lies motionless on the ground.

Now he is dragged out by four mules with tinkling bells, and disappears for ever from the scene. Do not think, however, that his adversaries come off safe and sound. We saw several *picadores* carried wounded and maimed from the arena; and later, while we were at Seville, Espartero, the famous *espada* king, fell, struck dead by a tremendous blow from the bull, at the moment of plunging his sword for the second time into the neck of his redoubtable adversary.

EL ESCORIAL

THE *ferro-carril* takes you slowly, at an hour's distance from Madrid, to a lofty plain; then again crawls considerably higher, and reaches a wild and rocky spot, relieved by neither tree nor shrub, a crowded mass of rocks, assuming all kinds of strange and monstrous shapes. In this inhospitable region, which centuries ago was even more difficult of access than now, in this wilderness of sand and stone, gloomy King Philip II. erected his cloister-palace, El Escorial.

When we left the train, the palace stood like a tower above our heads, and a wretched road, steep and

almost impassable, led upwards to it. We had no choice but to follow the example of some peasants, who lived in the village of Escorial, and we climbed into a waggon drawn by four mules. These vehicles are the worst inflictions in Spain; the rugged roads and the hard seats are very uncomfortable, and they plunge from side to side to such an extent that you are constantly thrown across the carriage.

When at last we had reached the summit, and the peasants had taken leave of us with their "*Vaya con Dios!*" we stood shivering in the rude wind, which here has free play. Everything around was beneath us; we stood on a high plateau of rocks; before us rose the enormous palace. The road to it led across tomb-stones, disfigured by dangerous yawning cavities.

Before the entrance-gate of the building we stood still in order to take in the mass of towers and domes, of which one, much larger than the rest, crowns the whole edifice; we cast our eyes over the hundreds of windows and doorways, and over the hard lines that held the whole together. And it became evident to us that the royal builder and his architect had come to a perfect understanding to erect a residence fit for a tyrannical king, scorning the world and its pleasures, and having nought at heart save the honour and glory of the Catholic Church.

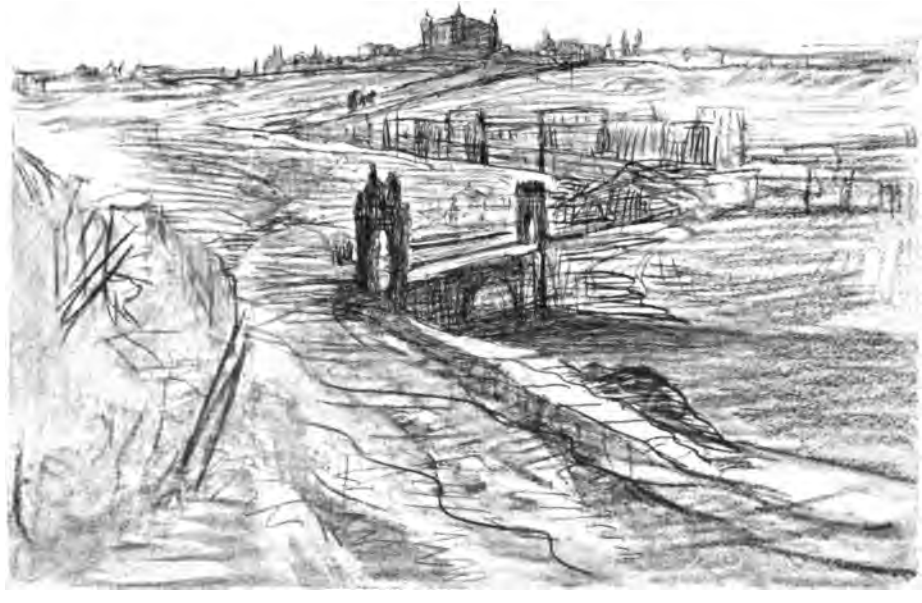
The impression received at entering is one of gloom and sadness. The walls are of unequalled thickness, and built out of the black granite of the rocks that form the foundation; the windows are high above the ground, and furnished with broad iron as in a prison. Priests and monks, in black frocks, pass in and out on every side; various apartments serve as a semi-

nary, and as a most remarkable library, of three long rooms, containing thousands of books and manuscripts. White-washed walls, from which hang numbers of most interesting old Spanish pictures, and below, shelved cupboards, in which the books are placed with their backs turned to the inside, so that the ordinary visitor is not able to read their titles. Thus are the faithful taught. Knowledge is only for the initiated. Learning is not intended for all mankind; it might be abused. If the tendency, nowadays, be towards the popularizing of knowledge, such notions are not allowed to penetrate within these walls. The whole tone of this environment is heavy and oppressive.

Only the church, and the services: these are delightful, after you have walked through all those sombre apartments, and climbed down a few steps, and enter, with bared head, the great oratory. There from every side the glorious light streams down through the huge sky-light upon the splendid marble pillars, decorated with ornaments large and small. The choir and the space behind the high altar have even been enriched by Italian hands with beautiful frescos, and handsome bas-reliefs improve the aspect of the walls. But this, again, is all. As you pass out, through the sacristy, into the royal palace proper, you come back to small, gloomy rooms, with nothing to attract your attention, and when you have gone through them all, you come at last to the room where the old King spent his long years of sickness and where he died. It is a dark apartment; his writing-table remains where it stood, and I saw a wooden *prie-Dieu,* on which I sat down. I then saw that I was alone; my companions did not seem to take much interest in this gloomy solitude,

but our guide pointed out to me how the King was able, in this room, to push aside a panel next his bed, and thus hear Mass and join in the prayers of the priests.

In imagination I saw the old, unhappy, yet powerful monarch, stretched upon his bed of sickness; there he lay, grey-haired, with his austere face, his thick, contracted underlip; his eyes shone brightly from their wrinkled sockets, and in his hands he held a large



vellum document. Then the organ resounded, and its tones echoed along the walls of the close bed-chamber; I saw the King drawing the panel with trembling hands, his eyes turned towards the altar, his lips muttering prayers. The incense penetrated into the apartment, the mass-bell rang out; I saw the priest kneeling, rising, making the sign of the cross. Then the royal head fell back; all was still; my reverie was ended.

When we had left Philip's chamber and entered a dark corridor, our conductor awaited us; and as he saw that I was no indifferent visitor, he pointed to a great door, covered with a number of iron locks and ornaments, in the immediate neighbourhood of the King's room.

"This door," he said, "had unfortunately to be locked, for there is nothing but destruction and vandalism to be seen within. Here, close to his every-day apartment, Philip had his relic-room; here he had collected hundreds and hundreds of the rarest relics of saints, apostles, popes and priests, contained in magnificent caskets of silver and gold, some adorned with jewels, others with chased figures. Here he would frequently come and collect his sombre reminiscences, and offer prayers for the salvation of all souls. God has permitted," added the priest, "that it should be plundered and desecrated."

A few steps further we came to a dark stone stair that led downwards; it seemed that we were to descend into a subterranean world.

"If the *señores* will follow me," said our guide, "I will show them the tombs of the Royal Family."

He rattled his keys, and the iron bolts grated as he drew them from their sockets. But we looked at one another and came to the conclusion that we should take away with us a sufficiently sad and gloomy impression of this palace; to hear read out the list of all the greatness which here lies mouldering into dust was too much for us. We ran up the stairs and returned through a pillared gallery painted with rough frescos, all picturing scenes from the lives of canonized servants of the Church. Once more we crossed the

great grey flags which form the terrace of the building, and made our way back to the public road, where all was deadly still. Only in the distance we heard the singing of the seminarists who inhabited the palace. It sounded across the rude environment, like the song of the dead.

Heated and fatigued, we returned to Madrid; and to our great disappointment the next day offered nothing but one long, hopeless downpour, and the day after, Madrid was cold and chill, wet and dripping from the rain. So we determined to journey slowly to the South, making Toledo our first stopping-place.

TOLEDO

MOORS, Jews, knights, armourers, Inquisition, tournaments, *autos-da-fé:* all these whirl through your head as you journey to Toledo. This most ancient city on the Tagus has been so much gnawed by the teeth of time that the plan of the city resembles no plan at

all, and one seems to be constantly returning to the same place. Short, narrow streets full of curves and turns, little squares, paved with large cobbles, containing no houses, but giving on to stone steps that lead you along passages with high walls, in which low apertures containing barred windows offer the only suspicion of human life behind. Yet one does not absolutely lose his way, because the town lies above and the river below, and sooner or later one gathers his whereabouts.

But it was raining at Toledo too, and raining hard. Fortunately it was clear on our arrival, for our progress from the station gave us the best idea how to find our way about Toledo. A long road, ascending from the Tagus below like a spiral staircase, offers constant surprising views over the river which winds round the city. A quiet hotel awaited us: no reading-room, no drawing-room; the coffee-room, *el comedor*, was dark, and looked out upon a stable-yard where asses stood braying and munching their hay. We felt no inclination to stay in this house more than necessary, and as soon as the rain permitted, walked up the street; but we had no idea of what it means when it rains at Toledo. The whole had the appearance of a mountain road. The streets with their great cobble-stones, raised on both sides of the way, are real mountain passes; and they were now filled with a broad torrent of water which the wind and the recent downpour had turned into a flood. With soaked shoes and dripping hats, we looked like lost wayfarers in search of shelter. Luckily a *carretero* made room for us in his cart, and we were soon seated again in our melancholy hostelry.

In the afternoon the elements were no longer so hostile; a few forgotten clouds drifted overhead, but the sky was blue, the streets dry. Armed with my Spanish walking-stick, I stepped from the door of my *fonda* and turned into the street. The stillness was delicious, and I wandered curiously through the twisting alleys and along the tall grey walls. The houses here are small Arab dwellings, with flat roofs, clearly dating back to the Moors. There is little evidence without of any habitation within. The windows are low down, but furnished with gratings that jut out balcony-wise, and protect the windows, which are generally left open, against ingress from the outside.

Through one of these windows I saw a charming picture. Before noticing it I had heard a child crying, and through that a lullaby in a woman's voice and a tick-tack which seemed to accompany the song. A few steps further I was enabled to contemplate the *tableau vivant* at my ease. It was framed in the large grating, which turned it into a three-quarter length; the depth of the room formed a warm, dark background. Against the side-wall, close to the window, stood a young woman, with carefully-dressed black hair, in which, as is here the mode, glowed a red rose. The yellow, flowered kerchief, crossed over her bosom, and her plain grey petticoat, gave her a simple yet bright and picturesque appearance. In her arms she held a poor little child, which leant its small pale face against her and gently fretted and sobbed. But she sought to comfort it by using a large fan as she sang, and tapping the measure of the song with it against the iron rail. It was a concert and a picture in one; my ear and my eye were equally charmed; the stillness

of the surrounding tone and colour, the plaintive humming of the sounds, the lines and attitude of the figures: all was homely and touching. Then I heard heavy footsteps upon the cobbles; a pedlar carrying his basket, covered with a long goat-skin; a low *sombrero* covered his features, and his breeches were twisted round his legs with string. A big stick completed his outfit. He struck up a loud song as he approached the window, and the mother and child came still nearer the window; it was clearly the husband and father. Like myself, he for a moment revelled in the pleasant picture at the window, and the mother held the child before the bars so that the husband could press his lips, with the black mustachios, to its face; then he went round the corner to enter the door, which was in the side-wall of the house. I stayed a moment longer, saw the happy father lift the baby high in the air, the mother lay the frugal table; and then, lest I should seem indiscreet, I went my way.

Is this, thought I, what I have come to Toledo for —a picture that I can see at home, anywhere? I had hoped for black knights on horseback, their Toledo blades buckled round them, old Jews with peaked caps and long gaberdines, or at least a little procession of white friars with torches, or something of that sort.

But this old city of Toledo struck no chord save that of my ordinary sensibility; for when I had climbed out of this steep alley and found myself in a tolerably broad street, I beheld a group which might have served as a *pendant* to the last. It was a tall peasant's figure, in a straw hat and a dark-blue coat. The man walked beside a donkey. He carried a long stick,

with the leaves on it, in one hand, and with the other he preserved the balance of a big basket which hung from the donkey's back and contained . . . . an almost naked child, which held a large apple in its hand. The grace of the delightful little naked boy with his apple, the loosely-plaited basket in which he sat, the

fine grey colour of the ass, and the robust and powerful attitude of the father, made a picture in which nothing was wanting. If I could only have painted it then and there; as it was, I had to content myself, when I returned to my *fonda*, with jotting down a note of it in my sketch-book.

SUNDAY AT TOLEDO

YESTERDAY the rain poured from the heavens, accompanied with thunder and forked lightning; to-day we can sing, "*Liebchen, was willst du noch mehr?*" A deep blue sky, veined with little smiling clouds. This Sunday morning is a true surprise. After those chill, wet days, how delightful to bathe in light and warmth. The streets are filled with girls in their Sunday best; they carry their fans and mantillas with a stately grace, and have selected the church for their meeting-place. We willingly follow the stream of the crowd and enter a great porch surmounted by a large

white cross and a flapping banner; we then find ourselves in a spacious square, which surrounds the church. These squares, or *patios*, of Spain have a characteristic picturesqueness. Here, in the middle, a fountain slowly clatters, and is caught in a large, weather-beaten marble basin. Around it lean or sit people who are waiting or resting. People rest a great deal in Spain. This square also contains the entrances to the houses of those who serve the church. You see priests and acolytes walking to and fro in their many-coloured vestments, with censers, banners, crucifixes. But finest of all is the sun, shining through the trees which are planted here and there, irregularly, in the *patio*, the trees whose foliage harmonizes so well with the grey environment of pavement and wall. In the great masses of shadow which they cast upon the ground lie the indispensable beggars, in all attitudes. Before you can reach the church door, a little old woman takes you by the arm, and with her head bowed in pity to one side, points to her spouse, a dwarf with no legs, an enormous great head, and black as a nigger. A blind man sits beside him and, whining, holds his alms-box before you. A young girl with magnificent eyes and wildly disordered hair holds out to you something that resembles a hand, of which a large portion is cut off. You start back, hastily fling down some coppers, and with a sense of relief enter the pomp of the great mother-church.

The tall vault rests upon broad pillars. At other times it may be dark and gloomy; this morning the sun shines so clearly through the old stained glass that a tempered, vaporous grey tone reigns through

the whole space. We hear a priest's voice in the distance, and proceed in the direction of the sound. The man stands high up in the pulpit, with his grey hair—which hangs about his brown shiny skull like a wreath—his large hooked nose, his deep sunk eyes. He wears a white embroidered surplice over his black cassock; he emphasizes his words with large gestures of the hands. Sometimes he beats the pulpit with his hands; he shouts, weeps, and prays. I can distinguish none of his words, and yet I understand all he says; but his words cannot prevent me from keeping my eyes upon the dark mass of men and women who lie upon the ground before the pulpit. They lie right before it and all around, their faces on the floor; it is a heap of black veils, black hair, black gowns, and, through this, glimpses of bald skulls, brown hands holding prayer-books, and here and there a white handkerchief held before the eyes. Over their heads the priest with both hands scatters his glowing imprecations and exhortations. I listen eagerly and attentively. At last his voice sinks; he speaks softly, for his own ear; the multitude rises. The organ groans, the choir resumes its chant, the mass is continued. We too had sunk to the ground; now we stood up and listened to the music, which sounded sweet and modern through the space. It was a mass by Verdi, and I then understood why it impressed me so strangely in this church, so harmoniously and charmingly.

We sat enjoying our beautiful surroundings, the picturesque figures, the many warm brown and characteristic faces, the rustling skirts of the stately matrons, and the music. All this combined with the festive

sunny glow which poured through the scene to give us a delightful Sunday morning, and I thought that, if I lived at Toledo, I would go to this church every Sunday. Every Sunday morning I would be willing to do penance, enjoy the music, the incense, and the glorious light, and imagine myself edified.

On the afternoon of this delightfully sunny day we explored the town and environs of Toledo. Through some narrow streets, all slanting downwards, down stairs paved with arduous, pointed cobbles, along very old and crumbling walls, we reached the Zocodover, the Arab name for a place or square. Ages ago this quiet city, where nowadays everything is Spanish and Catholic as a matter of course, was the seat of the Moors and Jews. The very name Toledo is bastard Hebrew: it means the city of the descendants. The Alcazar above, the Bridge of Alcantara below, have retained the names of their former masters. Yet so much, so very much, has happened here since those days. Nowadays, however, there are neither tournaments nor burnings on the Zocodover. The gay military band of the cadet school draws the whole town. Young subalterns stride to and fro, and the population of Toledo spends its Sunday sitting in the cafés in the pleasant sunlight.

We drift down more streets, and come to a museum. *MUSEO* is inscribed over the door in large letters. Alas! Is there no town without its museum, and is every visitor obliged to enter? Luckily it was Sunday, and the doors were closed; we were able quietly to pursue our way. Meantime we felt relieved to think that Toledo also had its museum.

It had not spoilt our beautiful afternoon. We

continued to climb lower and lower through the town, and with some difficulty, owing to the crazy ruins and wynds that do duty for streets, we at last reached the Tagus, where it is crossed by the famous old bridge of the Moors, *del Alcantara.*

I was very tired, and sat down half-way across the bridge, on a large stone. I quietly contemplated the old weather-beaten, but very picturesque, Moorish bridge; the yellow water of the Tagus lay around me in a deep bed, confined within rugged clumps of stones, which were heaped up into embankments, and wildly overgrown with trees and bushes.

It grew time to return, along the beautiful outer road, to the plateau above, where the sun was slowly sinking. I anxiously raised my eyes to the high ascent that lay before me: I was already so fatigued.

"I know," cried my son; "in this country you must ride a donkey. There must be one about."

A man stood leaning over the broad parapet, looking into the water and spitting circles in the river, after the Spanish fashion, while smoking his cigarette. His brown and weather-beaten face, his bare and muscular arms and legs, showed him to be a skipper, learned in the ways of wind and weather: his boat lay tossing a little further down the stream.

"*Bonito señor,*" said my son, "would you have the goodness to tell me if there is a *burro* to be obtained anywhere about here?"

He lifted himself slowly from his lounging attitude and looked at us with surprise and curiosity. Then he touched the stiff brim of his toreador hat with his forefinger, and said:

"*Yo creo, yo creo, señores:* I think so, gentlemen, I think so."

I did not understand where he was going to produce a donkey from in this wilderness, but already he was a long way off and out of sight. We waited quietly. Suddenly we saw him on a height above us; he clambered from one rock to the other, and at last climbed up to a little hut, which we saw hanging high above our heads. Something moved: it was a woman, who looked down to see what sort of people she was being asked to entrust her donkey to. Then her husband appeared, a little red fellow, without a hat, with reddish woolly hair like Sancho Panza, a fat red nose, dimpled cheeks, and bare feet. He dragged the donkey slowly behind him. This caravan, the skipper, the man and the donkey, carefully descended the hill, and we were delighted at having at last succeeded in providing ourselves with the essential, although peculiar, means of locomotion in the land which we were perambulating. Soon, with the aid of the donkey's owner, and of the skipper, and of my son, and of friend Erens, I was helped on to the back of my grey steed; but strange to say, after the first few steps, I as quickly, and with no help whatever, found myself upon the ground again. I was not in the least hurt, and was hoisted up once more. Now I understood better how to ride my mount: I must neither pull nor push, but simply respond to the beast's indifference with equal forbearance.

And at last I began to make my donkey go. When you are travelling beyond inhabited regions and are in no hurry, to ride a donkey is worth all the world to you. Step by step, calmly and peacefully, your long-

eared, patient steed walks on, with not a sound to break the stillness of the scene. You hear no rumbling of wheels or clatter of hoofs; you move through the surrounding landscape in a series of gentle bounds. You tremble a little as you approach a precipice and feel somewhat anxious on climbing a hill, when the stones roll down the path you are engaged in ascending. But the beast itself tells you how to conduct yourself. Although, as usual, my mount did not utter a word, he gave me clearly to understand that I must sit tight whenever the ascent became at all steep; at such times he turned his head upwards in my direction, pricked his long ears twice or thrice, and contracted his back, as though to say, Sit tight, please; this is a difficult bit! When, however, we were descending, he would lash his tail around me, throw his head back and then suddenly straight downwards, to show me that if I were to tumble over his head into the abyss below, I should have a very uncomfortable fall, and that he recommended me to sit well back and to give him none of my nonsense. Once, however, I thought he had lost his head; for as we were approaching the town, my solemn dreamer suddenly stood still, turned to the right out of the road, and marched straight up to a peasant's cottage. I tugged at his bridle, I beat him, I assured him by all his gods that he was going wrong: it was of no avail; but presently he stood still again, on reaching a big stone trough filled with limpid water. Without a word of apology my grey dipped his large head into it, quenched his thirst, and then crept cleverly back into the road and caught up my company, whose roars of laughter failed to upset his equanimity for a single moment.

My first donkey-ride gave me great satisfaction, and thenceforward I was always able to get on in the best of ways with these patient beasts.

At Toledo the weather continued stormy and unpleasantly cold. We longed for the south, the warm sun, an eastern sky; and so we determined to move our tents to Cordova.

CORDOVA

A REAL Spanish railway-journey takes you from Toledo to Cordova: no one is in a hurry, neither the traveller, nor least of all the train; the names of the stations are not called out, every one seems to know where he is. Long stoppages are made at the most insignificant places. You alight at every platform, light a cigarette, and have a look round; two carabineers

with loaded guns leave the train and are relieved by two others. The guard and station-master chat with the shabby troop of inquisitives who crowd round the train, and there is a perambulating refreshment-room in the shape of a woman who carries a large stone jar and cries, "*Aqua fresca!*" Furthermore, a heap of ragged street-boys, and, of course, a large number of beggars.

At one of these little places, where the train stopped even longer than usual, in order to await the arrival of another train, I was attracted by the lines of the surrounding landscape and stepped out to take the air. Suddenly I felt some one tapping me familiarly on the back, as though an old acquaintance desired to speak to me. I looked round and saw a fellow before me armed with a big cudgel. Addressing me in an idiom of which I understood not a word, he held out his huge hand and asked for alms. Irritated by the man's impertinence, I turned my back on him, and made as though I were sketching something; but a little boy standing by, and of the same kidney, screamed in my ear, in plain Spanish:

"He wants you to give him some money; doesn't the *señor* understand?"

This quite exhausted my patience, and I pulled a face as though I had no idea what was meant; and when his big comrade swooped down on me again, the small one screamed with laughter, and cried:

"He is a fool; let him go; he has no notion of what you want!"

In the train I saw that we passed Val de Peñas, the little place which produces the famous wine of that name. The country-side here was very different from

the region we had quitted; already we saw signs of the South, and the further we went the greater the difference. Aloes and cactus-plants adorned the roads with their broad and marvellous shapes, interspersed with tall ferns and variegated flowers. And finally the Guadalquiver, its yellow-green stream overhung by hundreds of olive-trees, with their crooked, black boughs, from which hangs the fine, thinly-outlined grey foliage. This tender green of the olive-tree, standing out against the yellow maize or the bright green garbanzos, is one of Nature's splendid discoveries in colour; when the setting sun sows golden stripes through the azure sky, as now, the whole landscape becomes full of richness and diversity; and when at last we approached Cordova, we all three put our heads out of the window. We saw our first palm-trees, which, with their long, narrow, simple crowns of leaves, stood out above all the other vegetation like giraffes in an eastern forest.

As we steamed into Cordova, the refrain of Heine's poem sang in my ears:

> "In dem Dome zu Cordova,
> Stehen Säulen dreizehnhundert,
> Dreizehnhundert Riesensäulen
> Tragen die gewalt'ge Kuppel."

Our curiosity had again reached a climax, and once more the morrow promised much.

CORDOVA CATHEDRAL

IT was a manifestly southern atmosphere that greeted us the next morning: a yellowish blue sky, no breeze and a sultry air. Toledo's narrow, tortuous streets were here replaced by a broad country road, which led from our hotel through the town. To us strangers this street looked as though a great road-sweeper had made a clearance through ruins, mounds of earth

and grass, demolishing houses, overturning blocks of marble; for in the neighbourhood of this main road to the city, where we encountered not a soul, we could discover scarce any human habitation. Gradually we came to inhabited streets, and finally to a square surrounded by a few tall houses; the market was being held, but without fuss or movement. Still, Arab-like, wrapped in white burnouses, sat the market-women, with carefully covered heads and bare feet, beside their big baskets filled with poultry and fruit. It was a foretaste of the Moors and Arabs we were to meet later.

Following the road, we came to another open space, and at last found the wonder of Cordova, the great mosque, temple or cathedral, before us. We beheld it with a certain disappointment: a rude, red-brown, stone wall, and behind this an irregular square, displaying no architectural beauty. Like everything else, it looked deserted. We walked to this side and that, and at last found an entrance.

"You must remember," said Erens, "for I have read the subject up, how often this city and temple have changed masters. The Romans and the Goths were the first to have a principal temple here, and when the town fell into the hands of the Moors, one of the caliphs conceived the idea of founding a mosque such as had never been seen before. Now this same spot has been harassed by earthquakes, wars, religious enthusiasm; one demolished what the other erected; and yet it remains a marvel."

When we had passed through the gate in the front wall, we walked along a handsome lane of orange-trees straight up to the entrance to the mosque.

As you enter, you are struck by a confused heap of pillared aisles, and you despair of finding the way. Slowly, however, the eye grows accustomed to the sight, and you perceive broader passages which point the road through this labyrinth. But Heine had misled us: these pillars were no giants, but little, narrow pillars, only a few yards high, rising from the floor without plinths. They spread out on either side into flat arches, arabesque in form, richly decorated, sculptured and coloured; and these arches carry the vault, which, however, far from being a "*gewaltige Kuppel*," is quite low, and is surmounted by another, borne upon a few taller pillars. The whole is a harmony of lines to which you must grow used before, slowly, it commences to rouse your amazement.

But suddenly this impression is disturbed. After walking past some hundreds of pillars, you come unexpectedly upon a wide space. Pillars, vault, all are broken away; a choir and a high altar take their place; you are in a Catholic church. But in a building so enormous a little mutilation does not matter; the further you wander, the more wondrously are you overpowered by the labyrinthine whole. The light which comes from the outside, from above, from the sides, and only half illumines all these pillars, and draws lines over the floor, gives grotesque effects of light and shade, and mysterious corners full of soft tones and shifting colours.

We were not very fortunate in our choice of a day properly to enjoy this famous building, for there was a terrible knocking and hammering in one of the vaulted aisles. We had to pass through this, and I, who am always somewhat of a chatterbox, struck up a

conversation in my best Spanish with the architect who was superintending the work.

"Oh," he said, "you have no idea how often repairs are needed here; this has to be propped up, that wants new stones, or sometimes has to be broken away entirely, to prevent its crushing down to the floor. The large number of gates and entrances which the building contains, but which you can't see from the inside, causes this huge edifice to suffer greatly from stormy weather; and the worst of all is," he added, whispering, "that there is not really sufficient money to do justice to this marvel of Moorish architecture. If that were not so, you would see something very different."

Then he took us to the real oratory of the Caliphs, which he told us was still quite intact. Indeed this oratory of the Caliphs is exceptionally rich in handsome decorations, and when you have looked at everything over and over again, you come to the conclusion that this is a building which more than any other displays the immense talent and artistic power of the Arabs.

When you reflect that here, in the evening, thousands of lamps burned for the *Maarif* prayers, that carpets were spread for the worshipping Moors, of whom hundreds and thousands dwelt in this city, you can conceive an idea of the spectacle which this conglomeration of pillars must have presented beneath these long and heavily-vaulted walls.

We felt somewhat depressed on leaving the mosque; all that ancient splendour, those stone monuments of a bygone grandeur, made us quiet and reflective. The sun outside, a palm-tree in the middle of the sandy road, with a brown boy keeping his black goats

together with a long stick, brought us to ourselves again. Everyday life has a charm by the side of which the finest works of art count for nothing.

On arriving at our *fonda*, we found it surrounded by street-boys and all kinds of people; clearly Cordova still contained a population. Nay more, in the midst of the crowd stood some military bandsmen. A general had alighted at Cordova to visit his family, who were dining with him at the hotel. A pleasant liveliness reigned in the *comedor* as we entered; the guests were all seated, and, as is universal in Spain, high and low sat at the same table.

At the head sat the general, a fine-looking, thick-set Spaniard, with big grey mustachios, short grizzled hair, and a dark-brown face—a real Velasquez type. On both sides of him were his family: a very old, bent man, his father perhaps, laughing with amusement, but finding great difficulty in conveying his soup across the white napkin fastened round his neck, into his sunk mouth. Two tall striplings, and some merry young girls, with their black hair dressed very high. We others sat at the lower end: there we found the regular customers of the hotel, strange weather-beaten faces, travellers in shooting-jackets, whose hunger made them study the *menu* very seriously, and examine closely all that stood on the table.

My neighbour was a well-dressed gentleman of distinguished appearance. I had already observed him in the morning, walking about the hotel with a busy air, clad in riding-boots, a flowing Spanish cloak, and a steeple-crowned felt hat. We ate our soup, and the next course seemed rather curious to us: a large dish full of rice, with Spanish pepper, and snails in their

shells, all stewed up together. I pulled a doubtful face, and did not know how I was to eat it. With great friendliness my neighbour addressed me in English.

"Try it," he said, "you will see it is not so bad. Yes, you will find things a little difficult here, but . . . I think . . . I shall be able to be of good use to you and your friends"— and with that his card lay beside my plate.

A card with a coronet above his name and title: Marques de Guaranja. Greatly honoured, I thanked him, but I did not think it necessary to give him mine, nor did I have time to produce it, for he immediately continued:

"I am a Spaniard, but I travel all over the world. I can talk English, French, or anything you like, and I am at home and well known in every hotel. May I have the honour of giving you introductions to the hotels you still propose to visit in Spain; you will see that, if you use my name, they will receive you better wherever you go!"

I muttered some reply, not knowing what to say to these offers of service. The marquis next stood up, called one of the waiters, whispered something in his ear, and rubbed his hands contentedly.

"Now you are going to taste something," he cried.

My travelling-companions looked round inquisitively, and the great man again rose from his seat and made them an elegant bow. Presently the waiter returned with a tray with four clean glasses and a bottle wrapped in many cobwebs.

"See here, *Señores*, this is Val-de-Peñas, the powerfullest wine in Europe. I supply it to all the big people in France and England."

He produced a neat pocket-book, and showed us the names of all sorts of lofty personages, his customers. Then he made his speech:

"You gentlemen come from Holland, I know, a wealthy country. I should like to have a connection there. Gentlemen, my book is open, this is an auspicious day; may I book an order to you?"

So that was what he was: a wine-merchant. I had some experience, however, in this matter, and exclaimed:

"*Señor marques*, don't you know that we in Holland drink nothing but water, and only take the wine which grows in Holland and is called a *bittertje?*"

The marquis turned red with rage, but kept his temper.

"*Señor*," he said, in a pained voice, "you mock me: I have never been treated thus before;" and when the dessert was served, he had disappeared.

We were filled with merriment and surprise at this nobleman, and doubtless talked rather loudly, as the military band from time to time tended to drown the conversation. Suddenly one of the guests stood up, and with a glass of claret in his hand, bowed to us across the table and said, in excellent Dutch:

"May I bid you gentlemen welcome to Spain?"

Electrified, we all three sprang up and touched glasses with our fellow-countryman, and after the dessert, with its many-coloured fruits and bright plates, was finished, we made our way to him and shook hands.

The guests separated, the general left the house amid much cheering and blowing of trumpets, and we stayed chatting in a comfortable room.

"Gentlemen," said our new friend, "I hope you will forgive me for joining you, but when for five years one has not heard a word of Dutch spoken, one gets such an unspeakably overmastering sensation on hearing it again. I thought Holland was nothing more to me, and now I feel quite disconsolate at the idea of having to stay on here."

He gave us his card, and proved to be the agent of a big commercial firm which bought wine in the mountains around us. I asked Erens to produce his card, but neither he nor my son had ever owned so luxurious an article. I must needs bring forth my own. He looked at it, examined it again, and asked:

"Surely not the painter?"

"No," I replied, "I am his uncle, this is his son, and this is one of his intimate friends."

"How stupid of me," he said. "Of course the painter is not so old; however, you are related. You must take a glass of good wine with me to celebrate our meeting. Well, and what do you say to this queer food, which they put before you here as delicacies? I have got used to it all: dishes of oil, with chicken-legs and livers swimming in it, and crackling dishes of rice and what not. And I'll tell you another thing, the people are only so-so. Very difficult for us to get on with. A splendid place, but no real Dutchman ever feels at home in a foreign country. Yes, when I remember how I used to come home to my mother's house at Rotterdam, feeling cold and hungry, and how a great cod-fish stood ready on the table, with a big dish of steaming potatoes, and she sat there. . . ."

And as I live, he pulled out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes.

The bottle was soon uncorked, and as there was a piano in the room, our jolly Dutchman went over to it, and played *Wilhelmus van Nassouwen* so that you could hear it through the whole hotel, followed up by *Wien Neêrlandsch bloed* and *Al is ons prinsje nog zoo klein.* We joined in the chorus at the top of our voices, and joking and laughing, we emptied the Margaux and discussed Holland and its inhabitants. Never in our own country had we displayed such extraordinary patriotism as here, in this old Spain, at far Cordova.

The next day our Dutch friend took us round to look at some fine houses, old and new mingled in the same quarter; we visited a few antiquities, and in the afternoon we went further south, to the fair town of Seville, the Hague of Spain.

SEVILLE

AS a lad, I always thought of Seville as a town where one wandered at night by moonlight, and saw Juliet sitting at a high balconied window, receiving an ovation from an Andalusian knight, who twanged his guitar for her benefit in the street below. But time has worked changes in Seville as elsewhere.

On our arrival we saw that the town was holding high festival and decking itself for a religious display, and we learnt that, on the morrow, the great annual

procession of the Blessed Sacrament was to pass through the town. It was Corpus-Christi day; the main street, the Calle de Sierpes, or Serpent Street, was decorated with statues, flags, and evergreens, and divided curiously into sunlight and shade, the effect of great canvases, which had been stretched from house to house across the street. This main road has all sorts of side-streets, twists and turns, and wherever the sun, warded off, as a rule, by the canvases, found a hole or an opening, it seemed suddenly to shoot down and bathe the bustle that reigned there in a shrill and motley confusion of light.

The whole town was decorated. In the cafés, all of which were open, people danced and sang, and it was difficult for a foreigner to believe that this was the prelude to a festival of the Church. When we returned to our hotel, where we had merely deposited our luggage, so as to be able immediately to satisfy our curiosity, we were despatched to a neighbouring house belonging to the hotel, as here every room was occupied.

An Alhambra-like building housed us at Seville. A wide staircase, with little thin, Moorish pillars, led from the *patio* to the long gallery: it was all in white marble, or at least seemed to be so, imitating the luxurious style of the Arabesque lace-work ornamentation. When I returned in the evening from walking, and the moon cast her pale bluish rays over the mysterious palace, I felt like a sultan and sought for a Scheherazade to send me to sleep with wondrous fairy-tales. Alas, when I got upstairs, all I saw was an old wife, whose wisps of grey hair came straggling from under her cap, while a long dark shawl covered

her bare breast and arms. In a sleepy voice she asked me if I required anything before going to bed, and I made for my room with the listless steps of any ordinary traveller looking for the number of his apartment.

Now came the morning of the Corpus-Christi procession. Through the busy, sunny streets moved a festive throng, and speedily, following the crowd, we came to the church from which the pageant was to start. Long rows of chairs had been placed in the square before the church, and we looked for seats. Oh, the heat of the sun! Quick to the shady side; but everything was occupied. I can still feel the sun burning in my neck; but when the mind is excited, the body can endure much. The many changing groups of sight-seers soon began to interest us, and we sat patiently waiting for what was to issue forth from the great old cathedral-porch. The broad pathway that was kept clear between the rows of chairs was strewn with fragrant green branches; from it rose a delightful scent of open air.

In front of the church stood a whole regiment of soldiers, two and two, unarmed and bareheaded, the officer in command likewise; but rising above the throng that bustled around us, sat gorgeous horsemen mounted on their tall steeds, and furnished with long silver trumpets. Thousands and thousands of people crowded round; but there was no shouting or noise of any kind: people whispered and went their way. Suddenly the silence was broken, the trumpets sounded and the great doors of the cathedral opened slowly. Calmly, with a stately step, the soldiers marched along the fragrant pathway, followed immediately by a

number of gentlemen, bareheaded, in black, members of the City Council, we were told. The Mayor, who led the way, was recognizable by a broad red sash which he wore across his breast.

These Spanish city-councillors, if the truth must be told, were no more picturesque than our Dutch ones at home, but what followed was genuinely Spanish, and possibly to be found nowhere save in Andalusia. Walking two and two, came little boys of five or six years old, all dressed in light satin jackets, with white satin knee-breeches, white silk stockings, and white satin shoes. Each held in one hand a little nosegay of roses and smaller flowers, and in the other a small lighted taper; and not ten, not fifty, but some hundreds of these little squires passed by the bowing crowd. It was like a vision of angels; the wings alone were wanting. Moving softly over the fragrant evergreens, their brown faces glowing with health, that earnest look in their eyes which none but children can attain, decked with flowers and smiled upon by the friendly throng, they formed a picture of what we are told of the holy innocents in Heaven. There followed music, but we did not look at the musicians, for very different figures come into view. These were the canons of the diocese, and a richly-coloured canopy was borne over their heads. Each of these gentlemen, indeed, resembled a cathedral in himself. Tall of stature, their chests thrown out, proudly they stepped along, some clad in stately clerical black, others in splendid vestments, carrying mysteries and relics concealed in costly caskets. Full of character were their heads, their haughty visages, such as those which Leonardo jotted down in his Venetian sketch-book; eyes set deep in

the heavily-furrowed brows, large hooked noses, upper-lips contracted, but the proud under-lip jutting out wide, and square fleshy cheeks, forming numerous chins. These were the giants who walked in the children's footsteps. Acolytes slung censers around them, and the pious multitude crossed itself as they passed.

The crush behind us increased: triumphal cars came into view, drawn not by horses or mules, but by hundreds of men and women of all ages. The most fervent of the parishioners took part in this pious labour. The cars were as gardens of flowers and stately plants, with waving palms and graceful ferns, amid which sat the saints, represented by great marble and silver statues, decked in colours of blue and gold and jewels. Moved by the oscillation of the cars, these objects seemed to quiver and tremble as they passed. One of the statues had an outstretched hand, which, as it approached me, seemed to motion me away as a heretic.

Now it appeared to me as though everything about me became suddenly inaudible; there came a great silence; I heard the sighing of the wind that cooled our heads. Then rang out the familiar silver mass-bell, and all those about me, and I too, lay kneeling with our heads to the ground. One heard nothing but the cracking of the footsteps over the palm-strewn ground; prayers were muttered around me, the sign of the cross was three times repeated; then I raised my head and overlooked the motley kneeling crowd, the black-haired heads, the bald skulls, children and women nestling together, smart clothes and ragged clothes in confusion on the ground; and above all this I saw a pair of arms

upraised which carried the Body of Christ in a splendid monstrance above our heads. Then again the great trumpets of the cavalry behind us rang out in a triumphant blast. All rose to their feet and looked around. The Body of Christ was far away and out of sight, and from our seats we witnessed the rest of the procession as it issued from the cathedral.

It was as though the agony of the Crucified had an after-effect, for all that followed was suffering and sadness. Bare-footed friars marched in great numbers. Compared with those who had gone before, they were covered with dust and ashes. Tall, lean, tragic figures, they seemed to have been hunted out of their cells to take part in the procession; it was as though they had

come to protest against all the pomp and circumstance of the gorgeous vestments and triumphal crowns, all the prosperity of the surrounding populace, and to express their contempt for all luxury, pleasure, and worldly contentment. A thick brown frock was their garment; bare were their shaven heads, bare their breasts, naked their feet; their eyes stared into the far infinite, without concerning themselves with what took place around them. Almost every figure made its impression upon me; but two of these men remained particularly in my thoughts. They walked side by side, and thus drew my attention the more: one was a young man of about twenty summers, the other a venerable old man, moving along with difficulty. The young man was tall and finely built; his shaven head, with its fringe of short brown hair, was well set upon his firm neck. As he passed us, his eyes were turned on high, great brown eyes, which were made to seem too large through the emaciation of his features. Was it my imagination that caused me to see tears rolling down his cheeks? His long, slender hands were tightly folded over his breast. The old grey monk was bent, and his chest panted with his exertions. Coughing and moaning, he hurried on in his efforts to keep up with his companion; his feet were bound in ligatures, which dragged behind him, and his pale lips kissed continuously a large silver cross, fastened round his neck by a cord, and held in his emaciated hands. They were all figures tempting one to sketch them forthwith, full of character in pose and gesture; never had I seen so many monks together, displaying so clearly, in contrast with everyday life, the signs of cloistered seclusion.

We sat closely watching the passing multitude, and did not notice that a conspiracy was on foot in the high heavens against the faithful below. Dark clouds had long been gathering overhead; suddenly a lightning-flash flickered through the sky, then another, followed by a loud burst of thunder and a torrent of rain. All fled, none knew where; we galloped on like all the rest, the cavalry-men, the monks, the banner-bearers, and did not stop until we were safe beneath the roof of our *fonda*. What had become of the procession, of all the crowd? As to ourselves, we were mainly occupied in changing into dry clothes, ordering a glass of manzanilla, and cigarettes, cigarettes for ever. Our *padrone* entered, shaking the water from his clothes.

"*No es nada, señores, no es nada,*" he cried, and pointed to the dripping window: the clouds were entirely broken up, and indeed, within half-an-hour, there it was again, the glorious, tremendous tyrant of Spain, the glittering sun. How splendidly it shone that afternoon upon the pink and pale-green Guadalquivir, casting dark-blue shadows between the hills and rocks which edge the flowing river. A broad bridge crosses it, and connects the city of Seville with its suburbs. On this bridge we lay baking in the sun like real *lazzaroni*, for the bridge offers spacious marble benches to the wayfarer, on which he can stretch himself unheeded by all.

Oh, the glory of the South! The air breathed out warmth and freshness, the water rippled slowly rustling through its deep bed, swallows circled above our heads and nestled in the cypress-wood which grew some distance away along the bank. Lying

upon my back, I stared up at rosy clouds in the azure sky, now and then dissolving in space, or adorning themselves with narrow edges of gold, and drifting, drifting far out of sight! Ah, the pity that one cannot always lie so, dreaming in waking for all infinity!

CHURCH FESTIVALS

SPAIN is the country *par excellence* in which the Church encourages the celebration of anniversaries, of joyful and mournful occasions in the history of the country and the people. The Church enters into the life of every household. When a new citizen is born into the world, when any one dies or when the anniversary of a death occurs, on the occasion of weddings or other festivals, the Church takes care that alms are distributed, that prayers are duly offered, that everything is done which the family should do upon such an occasion.

We heard that a special vesper service was to be held in the Cathedral, in honour of an annual commemoration, and that dancing would take place to the castagnettes in the presence of the resident Cardinal. We had already witnessed an ample number of ecclesiastical ceremonies, and my travelling-companions preferred to take a walk along the banks of the Guadalquivir, and arranged to await me at the entrance after the ceremony. For myself, I wished to hear and see everything that Spain had to offer of a characteristic nature, and I was well rewarded for my trouble.

The nave of the church was full of people when I arrived. Ladies and gentlemen in summer dress

greeted each other with lively civility: one could see that curiosity had won a victory over piety. The *prie-dieux* had been pushed aside, and a wide space cleared between the high altar and the choir. The sun shone with its broad, warm noonday beams through the lofty, richly-coloured windows, and tinged all heads and costumes with a peculiarly effective glow. All sat or stood with their eyes fixed upon the central aisle, which was kept clear by church officials bearing silver chains and tall drum-major's canes, figures of self-conscious indispensability. The long, tall candles burned upon the altar; flowers lay over the embroidered altar-cloths; the scent of wax and incense rose on high. Before the altar knelt the Cardinal, in his red robes, while a row of acolytes and choristers stood on either side of him. They were delightful to look upon, in their white red-embroidered surplices, with their fresh, clear-cut features, and their black hair cut short over their foreheads. One carried a great gold-clasped book, another a smoking censer, a third a large jewelled crucifix. The kneeling scarlet figure, illumined by the surrounding wax-candles, and the choir-boys standing around him like a staff, combined to form a real Spanish picture, rich and warm. I had time to take all this in amid the whispering silence and the movement, hushed so as not to disturb the father in the pulpit, who delivered an oration to which no one listened, for the end of which every one longed.

At last the small, wizen-faced man closed his note-book, the sermon was over, and he contentedly descended the pulpit stair. The Cardinal rose from his kneeling posture, and his tall stature, as he stood erect

in his robes, commanded the whole assemblage. He wore a white skull-cap on his brown head, and carried his red hat under his arm. The congregation rose to their feet and ranged themselves along the central aisle, from which my nostrils were again greeted by the fragrance of pine-branches and mignonette.

With a stately tread the Cardinal descended the altar steps, preceded by four of the tallest acolytes and followed by all the rest. These included one or two comically small ones, and I counted eighteen in all. Slowly, with solemn steps, the way was covered to the choir; here the Cardinal sat down in a large arm-chair, and the acolytes took up their positions in a wide circle on either side. Then one of the taller ones raised his arm as a signal, and the singing began. A sweet singing of children's voices, delicate and simple; it echoed through this great church, generally filled with the groaning of the heavy organ, as something fresh and new, as a sound of early morning, as a message from afar. Now came the clicking of the castagnettes, and a stately minuet was danced around the central figure. The Cardinal had donned his hat, and watched the children dancing around him with a kindly expression in his eyes, and his tapering hands crossed upon his breast. It was a charming picture to see the merry, elegantly-clad children dancing in a row, singing, waving their castagnettes as they formed a circle, with the stately, scarlet Cardinal in their midst: all this set amid the handsome architecture of the Cathedral. But now the organ struck in, filling everything with its deep tones; the Cardinal and his suite left the choir and entered the sacristy, and the ceremony was over.

Not for me, however, for I had read, above one of

the smaller exits: "After the ceremony the relics may be visited." Leaving the stream of the departing crowd, I made my way with a few provincials and foreigners to the little door in question. I passed along a corridor, painted black, to a large and ordinary room, lighted by a big window, opposite which stood a great oaken cupboard, taking up the whole wall, whose massive doors stood wide open. Within gleamed and glittered all kinds of objects whose use was unknown to me. Arranged along the shelves stood strangely-shaped boxes, curious goblets, monstrances, and a number of little chests, long, high, round, and square, all beautifully inlaid with precious stones.

We all gathered before the cupboard. A monk holding a long wand sat awaiting us, and on the opposite side sat one of the choir-boys, who held a heavy vellum book upon his knees, and leaning over it, began to read in a loud voice:

"*In este cofrecito*, in this casket are preserved the bones of St. Jerome."

While he spoke the monk pointed to the object referred to with his cane.

"*In este otro*," continued the lad, "in the other is the girdle of St. Veronica."

In this way everything was described, while the long wand pointed to the spot where these mouldering objects were preserved in their splendid coverings.

While in church, I had already been sensible of a terrible din of bells; but when I reached the outside, where my friends were impatiently awaiting me, I was grasped by the arm and dragged hurriedly away, for the deafening sound of the huge bells made it impossible for us to remain an instant where we were. This is the

custom at the conclusion of the evening services at Seville, but never in my life had I heard such an ear-splitting and sense-deadening noise as this. I just looked round, much as one looks round at an enemy who pursues one, and I then saw that, when rung, the bells of the Giralda are hurled outside the steeple through openings made for the purpose, so that the sound is not confined within the steeple, but clamours loudly without over the heads of the retreating parishioners. We rushed down the steps, across the square, and up the street, until the awful clatter could no longer reach us and we were enabled to draw breath in peace.

Seville is a most pleasant town to walk in, picturesque with its narrow streets filled with large windows and balconies, so close together, sometimes, that the neighbours are easily able to laugh and argue with one another, and to reach portions of their dinners to each other. The little squares are almost always furnished with small caravans of mules, which stand about picturesquely or squat down beside their paniers, with the driver sleeping sociably on the ground amidst his four-footed underlings.

But what is particularly interesting at Seville is the houses of the well-to-do residents. These at once attract your attention, and you involuntarily give an inquisitive glance in their direction as you pass. They are not really private houses, for there is always a garden in front of them, surrounded by an elegant railing. I had determined to call upon no friends or acquaintances during my journey, as this often gives rise to tiresome delays, as now appeared. Nevertheless there was no other means of seeing one of these private houses, and I remembered that in Seville

lived a young and famous painter who had sent me a greeting from Spain on my seventieth birthday. We accordingly decided to visit him. We rang at the gate, which was opened by a stately *major-domo*, who showed us to seats on two marble benches standing within the entrance of the *patio* or court-yard. Soon our new friend appeared, welcomed us with outstretched arms, and expressed his delight at making our acquaintance and at the honour we had done his country by our visit. In reply to his inquiry as to what he could do for us, I said:

"Your kindness in receiving us is just what we wanted, for we are anxious to look over one of the charming Seville houses which look so attractive from the outside; and I must say that it seems here as though one were in the world purely for one's pleasure."

"Yes," he replied, "these *patios* are the handsomest and best parts of our houses. Everything is always carefully kept, the flower-beds, the benches, the painted walls; it rains very seldom, and this fountain"—here he pressed a knob—"gives a pleasant and refreshing stream at night, for it is terribly hot at times." He pulled forward some copper pipes with lamps at the end of them. "In the evenings we light up, although we often receive our friends by moonlight; then the *patio* becomes our drawing-room, we have music out here, or play cards, or, in our Spanish fashion, sit, with big glasses of water before us, for hours discussing what concerns us painters so little: politics. Over here, you see, beneath this colonnade, is a verandah, where everything is arranged for comfort. Here hang a few old and tolerable paintings; there is the piano,

the writing-table; and if you will look up you will see the bed-rooms, which all look out with open doors and windows upon the verandah, so that the conversation is sometimes kept up till late at night between those who have retired to bed and the others who remain below."

Our host was a good-looking young man of a real southern type. Tall of stature, with a finely-cut pale face, and eyes with the wide lids which lend a certain melancholy to the dark eye-brows. His long and elegant mustachios covered a broad, warm mouth, and met a short, pointed beard which adorned his square chin. He was dressed to go out, and invited us to visit his studio, which lay at some distance from the town. A fine carriage, drawn by a pair of broad-backed Andalusian horses, awaited us, and we drove out of town.

O Holland, Holland! thought I, during the drive, what a much more pleasant place you are for an excursion of this sort than these great countries where a few miles of ground make so little difference. I compared this expedition with the charming drive along the Amstel to the *Kalfje*, or from the Hague, through Rijswijk, to Delft; what a wealth of trees, pastures, and water! Here all was arid, blistered by the sun, nothing but great heaps of yellow grass growing against walls over which one could see nothing—no lines, no perspective. Fortunately we soon reached a pretty villa, containing the studio and a stable for the horses.

The young *maestro* showed us all the work he had in hand, and invited our opinions on a big painting representing a Spanish popular festival, destined for the next Paris Salon. Many cigarettes and artistic theories

were puffed into nothingness, and when we took our leave it was arranged that we should all meet that evening in the Café Suizo in the main street, the Calle del Sierpes. I then saw that my dread of friendly attentions had not been without foundation.

When we entered the Café Suizo we found our friend awaiting us, with by his side a portly gentleman with a most pleasant curly beard around his fat Sancho-Panza cheeks, and a great broom of grey hair which covered the greater part of his forehead. His little grey eyes winked as he greeted us, and his big, laughing mouth bade us welcome to Spain. He addressed us in French, which gradually drifted into Spanish:

"*Moi l'honneur d'être président de la Sociedad Pictoral de Sevilla.*"

He had come here to bring me an invitation in the name of the painters' club; I was to fix my own day and hour, and a feast would be arranged for us. However delightedly I would have welcomed this thirty years earlier, I now declared, with many polite expressions, that, greatly as I valued his invitation, our time was up, and that we were leaving Seville on the morrow. I doubt whether my Spanish friends took this misadventure any more to heart than we did; and after a polite leave-taking, we made our way through the crowd and returned safely to our Alhambra.

The evening was clear and sultry, and we ordered our dinner at a little café or pastry-cook's shop, of which there are many in the better quarters, after which we strolled into the town in search of adventure. Seville contains numbers of fine shops and resplendent cafés, but these were in no way enjoyable or interesting

to us. The slums and the various popular quarters were more to our taste. A little door in the distance, through which we could see a light burning, attracted our attention, and we heard the music of a Spanish barrel-organ, which twangs and moans like a guitar and concertina in one. It was a ball, for as we approached we saw the advertisement at the entrance, which was closed by little muslin curtains. On either side was a statue of the Blessed Virgin, adorned with flowers and branches of laurel, and lighted by a collection of little wax candles. This was a peculiarly Spanish decoration for an occasion of this kind, but its poverty and naïveté attracted us marvellously and tempted us in.

We entered a great space, open to the sky and the stars above; paper lanterns of divers colours were hung here and there, and a stair-case led to a surrounding gallery. At first everything seemed much too dark, but gradually our eyes grew accustomed to this. In the middle sat a small, hunchbacked man, turning the handle of a clear-toned, tinkling barrel-organ, and at the same time acting as master of ceremonies, for with shouts and cries he brought the dancers together or sent them asunder again. On considering the company, we discovered that we had lighted on rather low ground; but when we had once entered, and found ourselves surrounded by music and dancing, our curiosity impelled us to stay. We had looked on but a few minutes, however, when we attracted the attention of the proprietor; three chairs were placed for us in the middle of one of the walls, and there we sat, like the king and queen on the stage, who look on while the ballet is danced before them.

Next came the interval; the organ ceased, the ladies and gentlemen separated, and we were thinking of leaving, when I saw a chair being approached to mine, and one of the ladies sat down beside me, in a fascinating attitude, and offered me a flower from the nosegay that adorned her breast. At the same time she asked me, with a very roguish air, if I would not dance a round with her presently. My friends too were surprised by each receiving a lady to talk to, and the *restaurateur*, as though we had ordered it, placed a table before us, on which was a great earthenware bowl of mulled wine, with glasses and spoons. There we sat like old friends, talking little and laughing much; for our fair temptresses did not understand a word of our Spanish, and derived endless amusement from our shyness and our foreign behaviour. Nor were some of the men behindhand in taking up a glass and drinking to our prosperous journey, and we began to see that the intention was to have a good time at our expense. In Spain, however, nothing costs more than a few pesetas, and we allowed our friends to drink their fill. The wine and the general merriment worked so well that I believe we found ourselves walking round with our ladies, arm-in-arm, and telling each other all kinds of pretty things. My travelling-companions sang and danced with the rest; and there was much joyful kissing and embracing when we left. It had grown very late, and we set out recklessly in the dark night to wander through the unknown streets of Seville in search of our hotel; but the god of topers protected us, and we arrived safe and sound at our destination.

MURILLO

O SACRED Murillo, how hard I stood staring at your master-pieces on the morning after that warm night, trying to explain to myself why I could not bring myself to like you and your work. In the Prado I refused to witness your rout before the victorious Velasquez. But here, in the museum at Seville, you enjoy the upper hand. The whole side wall is full of your sacrosanct canvases; your native city has done its utmost to honour you, and yet what emptiness in all this fulness, empty through monotony. You are too sweet for my taste, like pastry that contains too much sugar. I should say that there is no real style in your work, neither the elegant, royal style of Velasquez nor the rugged style of Ribera: with you everything is smooth and nice in colour and form.

When Michael Angelo draws a finger upon a piece of paper, it is a finger which he has discovered; Rubens, with a single turn, a single smudge of his brush, betrays his character and the idiosyncrasy of his talent. With you, on the other hand, this is replaced by an uniformity of execution that gives one nothing to take hold of: always the same colour-scheme, the same treatment, which makes everything soft and smooth. Dare I call you the painter of pious insipidity? And yet your works will always be compared with those of

the other great Spaniards, for your work is fine: large canvases fill the walls of churches and palaces with pleasant compositions, full of nice colours, and they have not the irritating qualities of doll-like character-pieces, with which you have nothing to do.

Thus I mused in my own mind as I walked round the museum; but when I had gone a little further, I stood still again.

"Come here," I cried to my companions. "What an ugly picture, and yet how fine it is!"

My paradox did not put them off; I saw by their expressions that they were as much struck as I. Morales was the painter's name, a name which we do not know much of. I had seen something of his in Madrid. Morales is the direct opposite of the pleasing Murillo. He is black, and grey; the colour is no colour, a tone, rather, of greenish blue-grey, but . . . . what feeling, what character, all brought in to express the great tragedy of the dead Son lying in his Mother's lap. Mary looks a simple little being, yet a being, a woman; she looks at you with a compassionate, pitiful face, and bends her small, emaciated head over the features of the expired Christ. This painting contains all that Murillo lacks: simplicity and seriousness, while all pomp of artisticity is banished.

Why will people always insist upon having paintings as furniture for drawing-rooms, galleries, churches or public buildings? Now we even have the modern idea that the picture must play its part in the general art of the building; it must play its part. And you, my poor Morales, are fit for nothing; you are not decorative. Yet I should like to take your work with

me to my little back study; I would not hang it up, I would set it with its face to the wall, and in those moments when one prefers to be alone, when one reflects in silence and is weary of the world outside, I should put your work down in front of me, and it would console me to feel the contact of a mind which feels and thinks with mine and raises sorrow to the level of that mysterious thing which we call poetry.

AFRICA

THE train takes some tedious hours to carry you to Cadiz, in the extreme south of Spain; the road assumes an increasingly southern character, and is already to a certain extent African. The houses are all built for the open air, and often show nothing but white walls. From time to time you are surprised by the sight of

men and beasts bearing the dark marks of southern latitudes.

Before our hotel at Cadiz, which had been recommended to us as the best, negroes and porters seemed to be fighting a battle. They tore trunks, parcels and garments from each other's hands, and rushed in and out of the door, with shouts and imprecations. At last a gentleman entered, placed himself in their midst, and commanded peace. Every one showed respect for this superior person. And in fact he looked very fine in his great jack-boots and breeches, his jacket of dark velvet, with costly rings on both hands, and mustachios that needed a deal of twirling. All became quiet before his glance, and we soon learnt that he was the King of Spain's envoy to the Sultan of Morocco, who had arrived in order to sail to Tangier on the morrow in the same boat which was to convey our party.

That was our destination: Africa, Morocco, Tangier. A new continent, a Mohammedan society; regardless of the heat and the sea voyage, we were anxiously expecting to set eyes on dark Africa.

We had not yet encountered this on our journey: seven hours on the sea, and all of us bad sailors; but I had calculated upon the new surroundings to divert my thoughts, and I found that I was right. The morning of our departure was fresh and sunny; we felt an eastern warmth, but it was delightfully cooled by a gentle and hardly noticeable breeze. Our steamer lay tossing and turning at anchor. The signal was given, and each settled himself down as comfortably as he could; and when I had already been dancing some time with the ship over the broad waves, there

was nothing that disturbed me save the hundreds of strange sights that moved before my eyes. In the first place, the sea—yes, the Mediterranean is blue, as though painted with indigo; yet this is only the colour of the background, as it were: the brilliancy of the glistening waves, the shadows of the clouds, the reflexions cast by passing ships upon the water, the alternate mirrorings of light clouds and dark clouds lent thousandfold variety to the blue water, and the rolling mountains with their white tops and purple-green middle tints give an incessant rhythmic movement to the whole.

But the crew and passengers of the ship are also a luxurious spectacle. Negro and Spanish sailors, travellers of every tongue and costume, from the English tourist in his check suit to the Arab who lies prone upon the deck, wrapped in his flowing burnous, and carrying his half-naked children, with their shorn heads and their amulets, upon his breast.

By way of *intermezzo*, two Spanish girls from Cadiz sat by my side, erect, pale and timid, like two little marble statues, with their delicate marble profiles turned towards the horizon. They did not speak, but pressed shyly against each other; gradually the one grew paler and paler and the other nervous and ill-at-ease. Silently they left the deck and went below, and I did not see them return.

For hours and hours we went up and down, sometimes as though we were descending to mysterious depths, only to be thrown up again by the prow: everything shook, groaned, and rattled; but the tedium was often dissipated by passing ships, pushing along with their motley sails, their crews shouting a greeting.

Steamers passed us, and men-of-war, and sloops filled with turbaned Moors.

At last, in the far distance, we saw a naked rock: it was Tangier. We were still in the open sea, but our steam-boat was anchored and remained stationary. The envoy and his suite appeared upon deck; a flag was hoisted, and far away in the vista something came bobbing along which at that distance looked like a golden slipper carried on a silver salver. Signals were whistled, preparations made for departure, ladders let down, and the extraordinary apparition in the distance resolved itself into a sloop adorned with large flags, which bore straight down upon us. It was the royal sloop, and lay to beside our vessel. A polychromatic spectacle upon this blue field, the black and brown crew with their white turbans, the sloop with her bright-coloured carpets, shawls, and silken cushions. A *tableau vivant* reminding me of Decamps, Delacroix, Rubens, Ribera, of all the big wielders of the brush whom I knew so well and admired so greatly.

Slowly, in the distance, dancing along, came the black cutters for the other passengers, and we quiet citizens experienced a somewhat alarming sensation at the thought of having to be tossed up and down so far over this great, billowing space; but there was not much time for reflection. A young man in European dress introduced himself in good English and showed us a telegram from Cadiz ordering him to place himself at our service. Behind him came five porters, their fierce heads wound in red and yellow cloths; a linen cloth was twisted round their brown hips. At the direction of our guide they caught us in their arms and lifted us on high; all

were flung into the cutter pell-mell, men, trunks, and bags; each screamed at the top of his voice, giving and receiving orders; with all that, the whistling and screeching of the steamer, which enveloped us in the black smoke from her funnels. A devilish din.

On the bench before me in the sloop sat two timid little old people, husband and wife, looking round in disquiet and alarm; they anxiously held all kinds of parcels, umbrellas and wraps together, and when we suddenly felt a violent shock, the little old gentleman caught hold of my knee to save himself from falling.

"I beg your pardon," he said in English, looking up at me as though inquiring whether I understood that language; and when I nodded affirmatively, he continued, "Is it not a shame, the way they manage these things here?"

But the brown barbarian, with the big blue cap on his woolly black hair, who stood swinging his great legs on the edge of the tossing sloop, gave the signal, and we sailed away from the steamer across the wide expanse of water, straight for Tangier. I cannot deny that this rocking in the open sea presented certain terrors for one accustomed to his daily easy-chair. As we lay there, stowed in between parcels and all packed together, it seemed as though we were lying level with the endless water, and were simply swimming along. Amid all came the danger of a large ship bearing down upon us. We had to heave to, and then go on again; but the rock approached nearer and nearer, we distinguished the sandy coast, the throng of people awaiting us, and with a shock, we found ourselves on shore. Aided by all sorts of arms and hands, not recognisable one from the other, we

stepped from our boat. No omnibuses, no hotel touts, only a pushing and jostling to get hold of our luggage and carry it away. Thanks to the calm preserved by our guide amid all this excitement, all went well, and after a few steps upon African soil, we found ourselves standing before the customs-officers of the Sultan of Morocco. What figures!

The first meeting with the official Mussulman is striking indeed. There is nothing here that reminds you of European officialism or of anything else. These functionaries stare at you with an arrogant indifference for all that concerns the stranger. It was as though the Sultan had selected them in order to accentuate the inferiority of the European in dress and stature. There was no distinguishing mark or uniform to be seen in their costume; but the attitude and bearing of the officers showed that it was they who commanded here.

In the shade, leaning carelessly with one arm against the wall, sat the chief officer. On his brown head he wore a tall turban, and his whole figure was wrapped in an elegant, white drapery, which fell from his broad, naked chest to his bare legs. He looked down contemptuously upon the bags and trunks spread out at his feet; he made a gesture with his hand, and we were at liberty to depart. Our guide took us to an hotel, furnished in the English fashion with all the comforts to which we are, alas, enslaved.

To such an extent are we Nature's bondsmen that, when at last I reached my room, where I intended to bathe, dress, and write my letters, I sat down on the sofa, and without knowing it, fell into a gentle sleep, with my trunks around me, my travelling-clothes on,

and no one to bother his head about me. I must have sat sleeping for an hour or more, when I was aroused by creaking steps; but when I opened my eyes, I at first thought I was under the influence of a nightmare. A big fellow, black as the devil, in a white shirt, was chattering gibberish to me and grinning with a mouth full of the largest and whitest teeth I had ever seen. I thought I was about to be murdered; but the fellow pulled a very small, badly-fingered book from his breast, and begged me to look into it. I began to understand. He was a donkey-driver and messenger, who had come to recommend himself; and the book contained eulogies of his exceptional cleverness and honesty, written in English and French, and signed by names which I had naturally never heard of. True, he spoke French and English, but in a way to be understood only by the Arabs; he understood me with difficulty and I him not at all. At my wits' end how to get rid of him, I seized our guide's card and made signs to him to come to an arrangement with that gentleman. He uttered a cry of surprise, and looked very depressed, but at last left my room, kissing my hand and bowing as he went. I was relieved, for I felt stiff from my sleep in addition to all my fatigue. My companions, who were now quite refreshed, came to see me and told me that they were ready for a good meal. I had half-an-hour to spare, and employed this in doing all that a human being has to do on such occasions. Feeling new-born, within and without, I left the dining-room and went to my own room to read and write.

But there was no question of that. When I drew aside the curtains that flapped before the wide-open window, I stood amazed and astounded at the first sight

of an African town. Tangier lay stretched before me as a panorama glittering in the sun. Endless rows of white houses, turrets and walls, lying as it were sprinkled over hills high and low. All was white in the foreground, all was white further on, where the turrets stood, and the mosque, tall, white, crenulated walls with openings that looked like loop-holes. White, all was white, far into the distance, where it abutted upon the exquisite blue of the sea. Glimpses of this blue appeared here and there, between all the whiteness, where the lines of the hills descended, or ran down a precipitous declivity into a low-lying valley; until at last the blue of the sea formed a sharp line against the horizon at the extreme boundary of the town.

I sat and stared at the beauty of lines and colours, and saw that night was beginning to fall. The colour of the sky became a greenish blue, and here and there the long, narrow, purple clouds assumed a golden tint, which caused them to glitter like bars of polished gold; but when I lowered my eyes from the gleaming brilliance of the sky to the white town, it was white no longer, a pale rose tint had overspread it, the sharp lines of the walls melted into one another, the pale red changed to grey, the gold vanished from the sky, and when I looked again, town, hills, and sea had become one, and formed a dark mass against the clear sky, in which the moon and stars became gradually visible. All lay wrapped in the veil of night; I closed my window, went to bed, and dreamt a confused dream of all that I had seen.

TANGIER

HOW strange, wild, and fierce is this Mohammedan world. The streets almost impassable: I compare them to a crocodile's back, so uneven are they, and with a gutter into which one continually splashes; sometimes, at an unexpected turn in the street, I stumble over a man lying with half his body within doors and his legs stretched over the roadway. Here stands a squat house with a shop in which they sell fruit, and a troop of children in yellow and green are playing in front of it, on a huge heap of offal, about which buzz a multitude of insects. The brown urchins fight and play around it, and take no notice of the stench and of the watery mire that runs between my feet as I approach it; and yet this picture presents a sunniness and a wealth of colour which attract and hold my senses, accustomed to the greys of the North. A black water-carrier comes stalking up with long steps; he is quite naked, the sun has burnt him black and dry. His woolly hair is almost indistinguishable from his knotty head, in which a pair of gleaming eyes lie deeply hidden, while a sharp, crooked nose and two thick, broad lips jut out, and the chin retreats, ending in a short, crisp beard. A small greyish cloth is twisted round his loins and swings between his legs; but he derives his real importance from the great

brown goat-skin swung round his shiny hide. The legs are just visible, the belly of the tanned beast is filled with water, and the neck serves as a spout to drink from. I should not care for it, I think, as I watch an old man, trembling in his legs, putting out his mouth and taking his refreshment; he is blind, poor old man, carries a branch of a tree in one hand, and with the other clasps tightly the arm of a sinewy lad, who begs for him.

But all this is nothing to the wonderful emotion you experience when you meet a woman. As I live, there comes a grey linen sack walking this way, edging along the wall; I examined it carefully, but could not catch so much as a glimpse of eyes or feet. Such is the extravagant injunction which the Koran lays upon married women; it is not a feeling of morality that conceals the beauty of women from all eyes, but the precept of the Koran, which declares that a woman shall uncover her body before none but her lord and master. She moves slowly, until she stops before—what shall I call it?—the door, entrance, opening of a house. Within its dark depth a multitude of children lie as though sown in the ground. It appears to be a little school, and she remains standing at the door-post waiting for her child. Hidden by the darkness of the doorway, she raises the veil that hangs before her face, and her child quickly recognizes her; but no one else can see her features, unless it be the schoolmaster, who sits far within and keeps order with a big roll of paper. A hand is pushed from out the linen bag to hold the child, and the pair return shuffling along the uneven road.

At night all is Egyptian darkness here. Our guide

and Mahomet, our servant, walk before us, carrying a little lantern. It might well be called a magic lantern, for it displays the maddest, picturesquest effects in the dark and narrow little streets which we traverse. Inconceivable fellows loom suddenly down upon us; their legs are lighted up, their heads fly away in the darkness through the street, which moves with all sorts of strange shadows. A walk with Mahomet and the guide at night, armed with a lantern, offers hundreds of pictures with the most curious effects of light, and always reminds me of Rembrandt's etchings of the Flight from Egypt: Joseph holding a lantern, and the shepherds who at night visit the Child Jesus in His stable. In this lies the true greatness of that man of wonders, that Nature herself so constantly recalls his art to you.

All these are trifles, however; we are on our way to the market of Tangier. Our company, five in number, mounts upon mules, always excepting Mahomet, who, armed with a stick, walks in front and acts as pilot, interpreter, and peace-maker; for the road we are now following is filled with all sorts of people, merchants, and beasts of every description, and to reach the market we have to work our way through the whole street until we come to another gate, like that at the sea end of the town. The crowd and throng of goats, carriers, donkey-drivers, women with baskets of fruit, all form an inextricable confusion, and now and then an oath is sent after us as we push and fight our way through. When we came to a mosque, with a large white sheet hung before it, and stopped for a moment to understand what was happening, Mahomet drove us on; we must not loiter,

we must get on. We pass by numbers of booths, push through the little dark gate-way, and find ourselves in a boundless space lighted by the dazzling African sun.

The first moment of arrival dazes one. Thousands of people, you could walk on their heads, all screaming and struggling together; and the ground runs up from the gate below, where we are standing, to where the road starts towards Fez, so that it seems as though the multitude is bearing down upon you from above. There is no road, no pathway to be seen; all push and rush against you; we dared not proceed, but Mahomet in front, with his stick, and our guide on his horse, by the side of our mules, protected us with the coolness of people who were used to such scenes and knew what they had to do, and thus we moved with the rest amid this sea of living humanity.

Ranged in a circle, wrapped in great grey cloaks, sat the women from outside the town, hunched down on the ground with their arms around their knees; they had all sorts of fruits, poultry, and plants for sale; so soon as we glanced at them their veils were drawn up to just above their heads. An immense row of sheep, brown and black, stood next to a multitude of red-brown oxen. Then there were great displays of carpets and wearing apparel. A number of men were even engaged in working and selling at once; many manufactured in the open air what they were exhibiting in the market. A pillar of blue smoke rose high in the air in one corner; it was a coppersmith, engaged in soldering and burning all kinds of figures into great dishes. Down from above comes an Arab, followed by five and twenty camels,

looking for a place to unload his wares; he has just made a fortnight's journey on foot from Fez. Brown and grey as the ground he walks on are his face, his hair, his clothes, his camels; all are covered with the grey dust which, during that long journey by day and night, has been blown into their hides. We at once thought of the Bible with its shepherds' stories. It was Eliezer of Damascus, setting out for Abraham's birthplace with camels and gifts, to look for a wife for Isaac; and truly, if a painter wished to treat this subject, he would here have the exact models of all he wanted before his eyes. The grave face of the leader of the caravan, with the cloth wound thrice and four times around his head, his sober step and restful manner, the simplicity and seriousness of his dress, all was in the character. Carrying a big staff, he walked before his marvellously long-legged and long-necked beasts, who moved their flat heads, with those large eyes of theirs, inquisitively from side to side.

A little further was a low, white building. One saw nothing but a large square of white stone, on which was hoisted a stick with a flag. This was the dwelling of a marabout or sacred person, and this priest or learned man, whichever you like to call him, sat before the entrance to his house, writing out amulets for which he was asked—and, I believe, paid—by the surrounding multitude. All sorts of people came and went, with a childish belief in the power of the sacred writings, and we could scarcely distinguish the holy man's person, closely surrounded as he was by his customers.

But strangest of all, to us, were two improvisators. A space was kept clear, about which men, women,

and children sat, stood, or lay, with the two screeching men in their midst. They sat opposite each other, and each held a musical instrument in his hands, with which he now and again struck the tone. To our ears it seemed as though the two artists were carrying on a violent dispute in words. Every now and then they sprang up, and with terrific gestures and cries, one would hurl all sorts of remarks at the other, in a singing, humming tone. They inflicted the most violent movements upon their heads, sometimes as though they were trying to twist them off their necks, in order to throw them at each other; then they would step back again, and try to excel one another in yelling, grating screams. I realized once more that one should see things for one's self in their own atmosphere. I had always read and seen drawings of the wandering singers, the Arabian improvisators, the popular poets of the East. But nothing can reproduce the sound, the gestures, the impetuosity of these Oriental minstrels; they must be seen. Motionless, for hours, the lovers of the art sit listening to these performances; and we ourselves, who understood not a word, stood rooted to the spot watching this strange scene amid the great struggling crowd.

Our guide, however, wanted to take us further. Mahomet had a terrible difficulty in piloting our beasts, and especially the donkey which carried my small person, through the jostling crowd. There was no orderliness, no rule of the road, no road, no lane even; but by dint of thumping and bumping we at last emerged into the space above, to enjoy a quiet ride through the neighbouring southerly landscape.

AN AFRICAN LANDSCAPE

NO sooner had we left the eminence behind us, than a scene very different from the crowd and bustle of the market greeted our eyes. The lofty, spacious sky was flecked with warm, white clouds; around us rose the scent of flowers and plants which grew plentifully in the plain and by the roadside; the whole landscape was, as it were, formed of flowers, and the roads, although loose and sandy, were never steep or troublesome. All around were aloes with their sharp sword-like leaves, cactus-plants with their twisted limbs; roses, red and yellow, stood in between. All this

grows up through the grey, stony ground; and one need not be a painter to see a picture before him, when he remembers this scene, sunny, fresh and charming. Is this dark Africa? said I to myself. It was as though I heard a soft melody in my ears, a picture, beautiful in line and colour. I rode in ecstasy upon my patient ass through small, still hamlets, with multitudes of children rolling brown and naked in the roadway. Men and women engaged in some handiwork, or slowly coming up the road with loaded mules, or driving sheep and goats to shelter, patriarchal in appearance. All this illumined by the powerful evening sun, which threw broad shadows across the valleys, and cast its gleaming rays into the emerald green of the woods, filled with singing birds. We heard the nightingale, evening was falling, and we descended seawards and reached Tangier as we had left it, through the brown sand of the sea gate.

My curiosity was ever aroused to know what the dwellings here, those great, square stone blocks, looked like inside. I was always told that it was dangerous, that there was nothing to see, and that, if there were, knowing the strange manners of the inhabitants, I could not get to see anything. One morning I was walking by myself, armed with my stick, to keep my balance on the slippery and uneven streets, when I saw a porch or gate-way, within which a woman was engaged in drawing water from a well. I waited a moment, and when she was gone I entered and saw a high, dark space, in which stood a great stone well, just as we see it represented in pictures of Rachel and Leah. High above the well was a wheel, from which hung ropes and an iron hook; all looked

old and weather-beaten, but it seems that such things are able to enjoy a particularly long life in these regions. I looked around me, and perceived, in a dark corner, a stone staircase, obviously leading to the apartments of the inhabitants of this sombre dwelling. Instinctively my curiosity drove me up these stairs. It was exceedingly dark, but when I had climbed a little above the well, the steps were faintly lighted from a small opening, apparently in the roof. I heard something come shuffling downstairs, but could not see what it was, owing to the spiral form of the staircase; as I mounted, however, I met a female figure descending—a tall slender woman, carrying a large pitcher.

When she caught sight of me, she turned her face to the wall, quickly pulled the veil hanging from her head over her eyes, and hurried down the stairs and out of the gate. It was just as though a vision had suddenly passed by me in that dark environment. I climbed still higher, until I reached the top of the stair, where I saw a curtain which moved to and fro; through its centre opening involuntarily I was able to see and to be seen. I stood there and dared not go further, not knowing what might befall me if I entered; but as I stood hesitating I heard, with great emotion, a voice cry, "*Ma mewakschego?*" in Hebrew, which I understand: it was a deep man's voice asking:

"What do you seek here?"

Thereupon I entered, and said in my turn:

"*Salom adonai salom allichem onoughi. Jehudi me eerets Hollande.*"[1]

"*Eerets Hollande,*" said the man. "Where is that? what does that mean?"

[1] "The Lord be with you, the Lord bless you. I am a Jew from Holland."

I endeavoured as best I could, for I am not at all strong in Hebrew, to enlighten the man. . . . But I must tell you what I saw and what manner of man it was. I had entered a dark room, lighted by a narrow, oblong, horizontal little window, by which I mean a cut-out aperture, which was closed at night or in bad weather with a shutter. The light cut sharply through this square and outlined itself upon the stone floor. Pushed close to this aperture stood a long work-table supported by trestles, and over it lay a great roll of parchment, which covered nearly the whole width of the table, and hung down below. Behind the table sat the Jewish scribe, leaning forwards with his arms upon the parchment, and turned his majestic head where I stood. The head seemed much too large for the body, which was obscured by the shadow behind and beneath the low table. It was a splendid head, with a fine, transparent pallor like alabaster, and wrinkles large and small ran around the small eyes and the great hooked nose. A little black cap covered the white skull, and a long yellowish-white beard lay spread in great flakes over the parchment document. He sat in a sort of arm-chair without a back, and a pair of crutches lay slanting from the chair down to the ground. How gladly I would have produced my sketch-book, and drawn that noble head with the beard, which formed one whiteness with the parchment and the light from the window, contained amid the gloom of this sombre apartment; but I lacked the courage in face of the scribe's fixed glance. He proudly displayed to me the beauty of his manuscript, the excellence of the capital letters, and the evenness of the whole, all written without ruled lines. He took

up his great goose-quill in a grand manner, dipped it into the black bottle that stood beside him, and showed me how he wrote. After I had assured him of my admiration, he asked me to hand him his crutches, and limped with me to the open, flat roof, which was on the same level as his room. Here lay mats, upon which he lowered himself and requested me to be seated. Together we enjoyed the panorama of Tangier, which lay spread out below us, with the hills and the sea in the distance. As I sat with this strange land before my eyes, next to this long-bearded old man, reclining upon the mats of this flat roof in Morocco, I had a feeling as though I were living in a world of which I had dreamt. When I rose to depart, the old man laid his hands upon my head, and with a "*Jeworechecho adonai wejismerecho*"[1] we took our leave of one another.

[1] "The Lord bless and protect you."

DEPARTURE FROM TANGIER

THE day before our departure, our guide and Mahomet presented themselves as we were at breakfast.

"What is the matter, Pinto? Why so early?"

"I will tell you, sir. If you gentlemen care to go on to Fez, we don't think you will regret it."

We looked earnestly at our two trusty attendants. They formed a curious contrast as they stood there: Pinto clean and sober as always, like an Englishman, hat in hand; Mahomet wearing his brown burnous over his fat chest, with bare legs, white teeth, and rolling eyes.

"Is it fine there," we asked, "and interesting?"

"Yes," was the reply; "it is like this, but much more Moorish, much further inland, and it is the seat of the Sultan and his Court."

"All right!" we exclaimed.

"Yes, but, you see," said Pinto, precise as ever, "if you decide to go, we must arrange everything for you; it is a journey of a fortnight or so through the desert."

We cast hesitating looks at one another.

"What has to be done, then?"

"Well," he answered, "provisions for the journey, of course: we can see to that; but we shall want a tent, carried on a camel, and a camel-driver, for it is very

cold sometimes at night, and besides you can't be always sitting on your camel or your mule. . . ."

I shuddered at the thought.

"And is it very hot by day?"

"Yes," said Pinto, "it is rather hot in the open plains, but then that is the African climate."

"Ah, well," said Erens, who was afraid of falling ill again, "that is all very well for Moors and negroes."

"I must know beforehand," continued Pinto, "as I must ask the Daja for an escort of two armed bazouks, else our safety would be in danger. There are always troops of thieves and brigands hovering about." We did not speak a word. "For the return journey," he continued, "which also takes a fortnight, we can arrange everything in Fez. I once conducted this trip very successfully for a diplomatist and his family, who had been ordered to the Sultan's Court."

None of the three of us, however, was attracted by all these delights.

"Look here, Pinto," I said at last, "whenever I am appointed on a mission to the Sultan, I will let you make all the arrangements; but in the meantime, I must remind you that, according to our programme, we have reached the furthest point on our journey, and that it is time to think of turning back. So I have another commission for you. Be so good as to try and secure three good berths for us on the steamer to Gibraltar."

GIBRALTAR

WHAT a cruel contrast between Tangier and Spain and—Gibraltar!

An English town, filled with red English soldiers, with their little caps worn on one side of their heads; all the shops with English signs; English ladies and gentlemen, daintily gloved, driving about in well-appointed carriages, or riding on horseback; it reminded one here and there of Piccadilly.

Gibraltar is a rectangular town, at the foot of the rock; and high in the air above it, on the top of that apparently inaccessible eminence, hangs the celebrated fortress, a marvel of fortification, they say. But English military life was not what we had come to see; we had come to Gibraltar as affording the best route to the adjacent part of Spain, through which we intended to go to Granada. And so we crossed the sea for the third time, steaming to Algeciras, the little town on the opposite side of the bay.

ALGECIRAS

ALGECIRAS is a little harbour on the Mediterranean, just opposite Gibraltar, and when the gun is fired in the fortress announcing the rising and setting of the sun, and also the opening and closing of the fortress gates, you hear the reverberation across the sea through the whole of the little town. The lively little place is seen at its best at the side touching the sea. There are numerous open-air cafés; the hotels are full of sailors of all nations. There are red English soldiers here too, but only as visitors among the crowd; turbaned Moors from Tangier; Jewish mer-

chants from Cadiz wearing their black caps and long silk togas; and women in graceful silken gowns, with wide sleeves and veils.

It was mid-day when we arrived and sought a lodging. A powerful, superbly-built porter, with browned legs and body, took the whole of our luggage upon his head and under his arm; we pushed our way through the tumult, and our porter, with the perspiration streaming down his body, at last showed us the house of the *padrone* to whom we had been recommended. He received us like a Spanish hidalgo on the stairs, and did not admit us. His house was too good, he said, for him to have rooms vacant on an occasion like the present. Didn't we know that it was *feria* to-day? With mingled cruelty and pride, he pointed to the *comedor*, where flowers and candles adorned the many dishes, and where there was not a spare seat: every chair was taken, and numbers of customers were being turned away. There we stood. Our perplexed faces must have roused the inflated inn-keeper's pity, for he called after us, and with a grave face, pressing his finger to his forehead, he informed us that in the street a little farther up, there lived an aunt of his, who would probably consent to take us in. Our Atlas, who had been sitting patiently at the door on one of our trunks, picked up the lot again resignedly, and preceded us to the house in question.

Here, before the door, or rather aperture, of this curious and ruined residence, stood a strapping Spanish wench, with a yellow silken kerchief, thick black hair, and a round red face. She was engaged in conversation with a shrivelled old woman, who was walking up and down the hilly street, paved with the most

charming pointed cobble-stones. We made our request for a lodging in our best Spanish and were amicably received; the faded strip of coloured curtain that did duty for a door was drawn aside, and we followed the chattering old crone up a dark stone staircase. We were careful to avoid the greasy banisters. After much climbing, she showed us the room which was all she had for the three of us. What a lodging! Small, dark, with one little window, a red stone floor, and a dirty-looking bed, standing crooked. What could we do in a room like this? Sleep on the ground, hang out of the window, spend the night on the two miserable chairs? Indignantly and with one accord we stormed down the stairs more quickly than we had come up, and related our experience to our carrier, who was sitting on the trunks below. How fortunate that strength and patience so often go together! Instead of grumbling at his tormentors, he calmly said that this sort of thing had happened to him before, but that he would now take us where he knew there would be room. Once more we walked along the streets, this time fortunately in the direction of the beach. Our terror lest we should have to spend the night in that darksome death-trap quickened our steps. At last our boxes were set down for the third time before a wonderful hotel, a sort of sailors' home: a number of them sat playing and drinking before the door. We passed through the entrance, a regular rat's hole, and could not imagine how we were to find a lodging here; but Pedrello, our proud conductor, went in front and showed us, in a corner, the staircase which we were to mount.

We entered a very cheerful room, adorned for the fair: a long table, with coloured paper flowers upon the white cloth, laid for a number of persons. A young man dressed in bull-fighter's costume spoke to us politely and kindly, and said we could take our seats where we would. This was so much to the good, but it was not enough: we wanted a lodging for the night. That was the weak point. But the active little man trotted through the house with us. Was it a house, or was it a tower, or a cellar? In any case, O wonder of wonders, a room and a bed was found for each of us.

We found the *feria* dinner pleasant and amusing, although a little rough and uncomfortable, amidst all those fellows, so strange to us, and those women and girls laughing and smiling to us, without our being able to understand them. Happily all passed off without accidents or disputes, and we had the prudence to retire early from this somewhat dangerous company.

Carrying an old-fashioned candlestick with a dripping tallow-candle, tired with the confusion that had reigned around us, it was well that I could not make a close inspection of the apartment allotted to me; I fell asleep without care for my surroundings. I was aroused by the gun of Gibraltar, but went to sleep again. When I awoke, I saw that there was a curtain to my bed as a protection against the early morning light, which came through the window against which my bed stood. Inquisitively I looked around me, and I was not charmed with what I saw: this was certainly the most poverty-stricken chamber I had ever occupied. The door, which I thought I had locked, stood ajar; the great rusty lock was hanging down, key and all. Large red rafters ran aslant across the ceiling; the bare

yellow walls had blue patches, besides big, crumbling, grey holes, where nails had been pulled out; the floor consisted of red tiles, which had been so badly treated that the solitary chair stood crooked, planted in the tile-dust. Where was my washing apparatus? I presumed that, if I wanted to wash, I could go down to the pump below and use the common towel, for here was nothing, neither above nor under the bed. Fortunately my clothes had not touched the ground; but when I was half dressed, I found I could no longer endure this shutting out of the light: I violently pushed the bed away from the window, and lo! the horrible den in which I had slept was turned, as by enchantment, into an Aladdin's palace. The window, now that the curtain was removed, opened and admitted me to a balcony with an iron rail. True, the balcony was weather-beaten and covered with grit, the railing bent and rusted; but I had prudently tested it, all was sound and strong; I set down the chair, which I had but lately despised, and there I sat, with the Mediterranean at my feet, Gibraltar opposite me, the African coast on my right, the blue mountains of Spain on my left, and all this bathed in the clear, delightful atmosphere. Around me flew hundreds of swallows, circling in and out of my window; and the distant mountains and near sea decked themselves continuously in ever-varying hues and effects of clouds. Steamboats puffed to and fro, looking like ornaments in the distance. Sailors sang in the rigging of their ships, people and carts below made noise and bustle, and I, enthroned on high, sat there, upon my weather-beaten balcony, like an inaccessible conqueror, who had ordered all this to play and work for his amusement.

THE FERIA

THROUGH long, steep streets, stumbling and twisting over the bad pavements, jostling the crowd of fair-goers, we walked through the small irregular town, which looked picturesque with its little squares and steeples in the moonlight. At last, in the midst of a great assemblage of tents and booths of every kind, we arrived on the ground. It had something of a great,

long ball-room, of which the ceiling was formed by hundreds of overhanging lamps of all sizes; yet it was in the open air: one saw the trees and felt the yielding grass beneath his feet, and sometimes the light of the moon and stars penetrated between the swinging lanterns. It was a spacious, airy fair. The multitude thronged around African jugglers, Italian singers and clowns; glasses of sweet drinks stood ready on little tables beneath an outstretched canvas, with tarts and pastry in heaps. There was none of the vulgar crowding, the offensive shrieking, which turns our native kermesses into pandemonia. The elders walked about gravely, the young people merrily chatting and laughing; all the inhabitants of the little town were there, with numbers of strangers and peasants from the surrounding district.

Among the rest was a lady, no longer young, but with a beautiful face and figure, and with something striking in manner and dress. Like Phèdre, she was escorted by two exquisitely-dressed female companions. The trio presented so remarkable an appearance that my son and I both produced our sketch-books and began to take a note. To our alarm she saw what we were doing; yet she continued to stand still, friendly and smiling, until the crowd of sight-seers drove her away, and bowing, with a sweeping gesture of the hand, she passed on. It was a celebrated actress and dancer from the neighbourhood, with her assistants.

We followed the three at a distance. They stopped under a canopy, set in front of a tent; chairs had been placed for them, the crowd formed a wide circle around them, and the three women sat down, and some gentlemen came up and politely handed them wine and

cakes. This lasted but a moment. Two shapely fellows, with ribbons in their hats and at their knees, carrying a guitar and castagnettes, placed themselves behind the ladies and struck up a dance-tune. Then the three women rose, embraced each other, and proceeded to execute a dance resembling that which I had seen at Madrid on the feast of Saint Isidoro. But here the dance had still more meaning, more style, more character. It was a dance and a pantomime in one. They danced not only with their feet; they danced with hands, arms, eyes, with movements of the head. The elegantly-dressed head of the great dancer in the middle was, as it were, the principal object displayed for our admiration. She raised her eyes to Heaven in ecstasy, she bent down as though about to lift a treasure from the ground. Gracefully turning, bowing to left and right, tripping backwards and forwards with a hundred tiny steps, she seemed to multiply herself, as she strewed the ground with flowers and threw her fan into the air, to catch it again with unequalled dexterity. Such was this real Spanish dancer, the darling of the neighbouring villages; and the people applauded with voices, hands and feet, and surrounded her at the finish with all kinds of refreshments, trifling presents, and compliments.

In fact this *feria* had more of an evening-party among fashionable people than of a fair or kermesse; but then it was a Spanish peasants' *feria*. Distinction and reserve are born in the Spanish. It is only when under the influence of outbursts of hatred and revenge that these people become dangerous, like most Southerners, who, led by impulse, easily go to extremes. There was no occasion therefore for the

very few mounted *aguazils* noticeable on the outskirts of the fair. · The people all sang and danced in groups; and the clowns on their platforms astounded the laughing peasants below. After sipping a glass or two, and wandering a few times through the street of booths, we returned seawards down the sloping streets, and as I went to bed in my shabby room, I rejoiced in anticipation at the thought of the cannon-shot which would call me to my balcony the following morning.

The next day a bull-fight was to take place at Algeciras in honour of the *feria*. This presented no attraction to us, however; for to visit these performances repeatedly you have to be a Spaniard. We decided that we had seen enough of them, and proceeded to strap our knapsacks before leaving Algeciras, the low-lying fishing-village, for Ronda, high up in the mountains.

The road to the railway-station was well worth the long walk. On the coast side there was much activity of arriving and departing steam-boats, of rowing-boats with waving ensigns and pennants, their crews singing to the rhythm of the oars; a busy multitude in holiday costume walked about in the morning sun. I stopped for a moment, for when we had come a little further, where the road was quiet and deserted, I saw a woman standing on an eminence with a child on her arm, looking far out to sea.

"Do please come on!" cried the others. "We shall miss the train if you loiter so, and you've seen that so often before, at home. . . ."

The accusation was true. Time after time I had seen the same sight, repeatedly put it on canvas, and yet, although it was precisely the same thing, I could

not cease relishing the distinction between that same thing seen here and there. With us the figures are wrapped up from head to foot against the cold, the wind, the damp ground; grey downs are on every side, the sea is grey, grey the rainy sky. Here mother and child were but sparsely clad; her black hair fluttered along the woman's temples; a brown woollen rag barely sufficed to cover the nakedness of the pair. And this group stood upon a height looking like a statue that is of one piece with its pedestal, and the whole stood out against a background of soft, agate-blue mountains, hazy and delicate, while the foreground was warm and sunny. Eternally the same, in a thousand different forms: that is what it was.

The trains are in no hurry in this part of the country, and we did not miss ours. It took us straight up, along great mountain-sides, where no vegetation grew, but from time to time a silvery stream came dashing down. We arrived at mid-day, hot and weary. No omnibus, a porter was sufficient. The main street containing our hotel (an odd name for a stable with a peasant's dwelling attached) was near the station. The little town lay swooning beneath the sun; all the windows were closed, the white walls reflected the sunlight in a blinding fashion, there was neither man nor beast to be seen, all hid themselves from the common enemy. We too entered our *fonda* to draw breath and refresh ourselves a little in the shade. It grew better towards evening; we ventured to go and stretch our legs before dinner, which is served at a very late hour here, and in the quiet of the evening we went for a stroll in the Alameda.

RONDA

IT was a still and wonderfully fine evening, of the kind which we in Holland do not know; the heat had given place to a pleasant, balmy warmth, the sky was red with gold, sprinkled with small azure clouds, and the prominent, thickly-verdured mountain-tops stood out with a deep dark green against the glow of the setting sun. Our road ended in a high, flat rock, with a tall iron railing to it, to prevent a sudden fall into the precipice below. There we lay down to rest. Far beneath us, along sloping ground, lay the valley; great broad shadows covered the crooked footpaths; a

mountain stream hurried downwards with a soft murmur, drawing a gleaming line across the dark plain. An eagle, with wings far outstretched, appeared before our eyes. Screeching shrilly, he described wide circles about his nest, which seemed to be but little removed from our resting-place; it must probably be in that deep cleft over there, by those hanging bushes. He was soon followed by a second eagle and three young ones. At first they all flew round in a circle; then they soared straight up, to the furthest height our eyes could attain, until at last they vanished from our sight. It grew quiet and dark around us, and we strolled back to our peasant's dwelling for dinner. There were some other guests; the yellow wine of the country found much favour, and we talked and smoked freely by candle-light.

One of the guests at table was a German commercial agent, a pleasant talker, and an experienced traveller and sportsman, and after dinner we strolled up the main street together. It presented a very different aspect from what it had borne in the daytime. The deadly stillness had made way for a cheerful bustle, for none had occasion now to dread the heat of the day, although the walls still glowed with it. Young women and girls walked arm-in-arm, busily chattering, up and down the streets; people sat taking the air outside their houses, some in picturesque groups playing cards by the light of a single candle, or enjoying a chat with passing friends.

We found our attention fully occupied in watching the passers-by, and went to sit in front of an inn. At Algeciras, I said, some one had warned me that "over there, at Ronda," I should find "nothing but brawlers

and bravos, horse-stealers and pickpockets;" but our traveller would have none of it.

"I know the Ronda people very well," he said. "There is a large trade in horses done here, and that is a business in which you always find a good deal of quarrelling and cheating; also the poorer part of the population is cunning and artful. On the other hand there are many who are simple and childlike. One of my friends, an elderly gentleman, but belonging to the sturdy race of men you find here in the mountains, told me how he had once gone to visit an uncle of his who is the prior of a small monastery some little way off. He was anxious to get home early, and therefore did not return by the road he usually took through the mountains, but by another which seemed shorter to him. When he had walked some distance, he discovered that he had lost the path, and began to wonder how he was to find his way home. He looked round, and saw a young girl sitting on the edge of a rock and throwing stones into a stream which came noisily rushing down the mountain-side. He went up to her: she was a pretty child of about sixteen, with a basket by her side which she had filled with things she had picked up by the way—fruits, horse-shoes, rags, and so on.

"'*Querida!*' he said. 'Can you tell me how to get into the road to the town?'

"The child looked at him searchingly with her great jet-black eyes.

"'*Bonito señor*,' she said, 'you may thank the Blessed Virgin you came across me, for you could never find the road; you are in a labyrinth you would never get out of.'

"'Come, come,' said the old gentleman crossly; 'tell me quickly which way the road lies, and *vaya con Dios!*'

"'*Vaya con Dios?*' repeated the girl. 'Give me three pesetas and I'll show you the road.'

"'Three pesetas to show me the road! I would rather lose my way a hundred times than pay to be shown it. I'll find it without your help.'

"And so he did. He hunted about, took a turn round the mountain, and found the road he wanted. When he reached the town, the market-place was very busy; a number of horses were being shown, and there was much shouting and bustle of horse-dealers with their whips and sticks. In this crowd he felt some one pushing against him and passing on; and then he saw that it was the little girl from the mountains. She waved her hand and nodded to him, but he pretended not to know her and would have nothing to do with her. When, however, he reached his house and was about to go in, there stood the little figure with the black hair and the bare feet. She held up a pocket-book above her head, and said:

"'*Caro señor*, you dropped this, let me restore it to you.'

"'Dropped it!' cried the old man. 'You've picked my pocket, you sly minx.'

"'But see, *bonito señor*,' said the girl, 'I am giving it you back, I have not even looked inside it. Now do think charitably of me,' she continued, with her head on one side; 'we have met three times, and just think, I have a blind father, and a sick mother, and four little brothers and sisters, who eat a lot and earn nothing, and then,' she went on, with her eyes to the ground, 'I

have a sweetheart, and he's left me in the lurch, and that's why I look so sad to-day.'

"And then she put out her little hand to the old gentleman with such a funny gesture that he could not but drop a peseta into it, and call out, '*Vaya con Dios*' to her as he went in."

This and other stories, mostly of thieves and criminals, whirled through my head as we entered our inhospitable inn. The man who led the way to my bedroom, carrying a reeking candle in a tin candlestick, was not exactly calculated to calm my timid imagination. A regular brigand, I thought, as I looked at his pale yellow face with its crooked red nose. His grey, short-clipped, greasy hair was plastered down on his head. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and wore nothing besides save a tight pair of striped trousers, through which his bare feet protruded. Nor was my room particularly cheerful: a very large, gloomy apartment, with an iron bed wide enough for three little men of my size; red octagonal tiles covered the floor; there was no other furniture. Yet by my bed-side I saw two pictures; I took the candle to them, and by the flickering light found that they were coloured prints of saints. One represented Our Lady draped in violet-blue, and wafted in an orange-yellow sky; the other St. Peter, sword in hand, and clad in a bright red gown: the Prussian-blue back-ground was meant to represent a cave.

As I undressed, I saw that there was a very large window, through which I could see the dark sky; the mountain wind whistled round the house, which seemed to creak and moan in every corner. There was no question of getting my door properly fastened;

the lock had clearly not been used for years, and the best I could do was to persuade it to stay ajar. In Heaven's name, I thought, I must lie down under the protection of the saints hanging by my bed, and I laid my head upon the pillow with the resignation of one prepared to meet his doom. I remember hearing a dog sniffing at my door, and then I fell asleep, and to my surprise I had an excellent night. I was awakened, however, early in the morning, not by robbers with their hands on my throat, but by the bright light which came streaming through the great curtainless window.

These windows at Ronda are particularly large; they come almost down to the ground, and are built out balcony-wise. They are furnished on the outside with great iron bars, fitted with little doors, through which one can talk with any one outside the house. I went and sat at my window, opened the little barred doors, and let in the delicious fresh air from the mountains. Such a peaceful view: a row of low white houses before me, and above them the tall, grey rock, overgrown with hanging plants, and moist with the morning dew.

We were waited on at breakfast by our bare-headed, bare-footed giant, who brought us chocolate and dry bread; the butter and cheese and yellow wine which stood on the table we left untouched: we could not stomach the taste and smell so early in the morning. But the chocolate is good wherever you go, and the hard bread becomes a little softer when you soak it in the chocolate. We would have given much for a good cup of tea, but the refreshing mountain air atoned for everything.

Our guide was awaiting us at the door with two mules and a donkey with a side-saddle for me. We rode into the mountains. The further we went, the quieter did our noisy caravan become, for we were riding down a very steep incline. As the most important person of the party, I was held in my saddle by the firm hand of the guide. Not only was the road steep, but it rolled down with us as we went. Great lumps of rock flew right and left and rolled down the road, falling at last with a dull thud into the abyss; but with eyes cast up and a stout heart, we found this exquisite mountain landscape delightful, especially when our path led along the edge of a tall rock beside a rustling stream, which came dashing down from above, twisting in curve upon curve. Giddy from the light and the difficult road, we arrived at last at a wide and open plain. Here we alighted and let our beasts feed on the stubbly grass that grows in the interstices of the rocks. We lit our cigarettes and enjoyed the lofty and spacious panorama at our ease.

We heard the clicking of a water-mill in the distance. My young fellow-travellers were very anxious to go and see it. The guide spoke wonders of it, but dared not advise "*señor padre*" to go climbing over all those rocks and gates. As far as I was concerned, I was satisfied to stay where I was. The three of them, the guide walking ahead, went off to visit the mill, promising to return at once.

There I sat, alone in that great lonely expanse. I heard the rattle of the mill, the ripple of the water, the buzzing of flies and beetles. Butterflies hovered around me, lizards crawled over the rocks. Left all alone

amid this wild solitude, I began to perceive that I was nothing of a hero; every sound and movement caused me to start, a bird soaring up from a bush, a dog barking in the distance. And there, as I live, came a great brown eagle swooping down from a cleft in the rocks right above my head. He described a series of circles high up above me. I grasped my stick, as though I could

have done anything with that! Fortunately he did not seem to care for me as prey, but spread his great pinions and soared onwards with a swift flight. There I sat again, peering before me, always alone. The time hung heavily; they might have been back by now. Again I heard a sound, this time from below; it was the tinkle of a bell, of the kind carried by the leader of a herd of cattle. And it proved to be so: a troop of black and brown

goats, followed by their keeper, came climbing up the hillside on which I sat amusing myself with digging pebbles out of the ground. The goatherd was a sturdy lad of exactly the same hue as his charges. His thick, jolly head was brown, as was his short leather jacket, and his trousers and shoes were of black goat-skin. After we had exchanged the usual morning greetings, the somewhat strong-smelling boy came and sat down sociably by my side. Neither of us could make much out of what the other said, but I produced some cigarettes and offered them to him. But we had no lights. "*Nada, nada,*" he cried, went to one of the loose heaps of stones, hunted for a tuft of dry grass, stuck it in between, and in a moment had a blaze. I tried to express to him by signs my admiration at his handy way of getting a light. He stood up again, looked about a little further, and returned with two bits of stick. He showed them to me, but I understood nothing. Next he spread a little hard blade of grass over them, and began to whistle into this instrument until it resounded afar. Then he took up his stick, flung it up with a whirr into the air, until it went almost out of sight, and quietly and calmly caught it in his hand again. "That is useful," I conveyed to him, "when eagles come down upon your herd." When he understood that I was talking of an eagle, he made a gesture of terror and alarm, and traced the sign of the cross upon his breast.

The lad stayed with me quite a long time; when his goats came too near to me he took his stick and made them caper about. . . . But all this time I was waiting for them who had not returned. I had just made up my mind to climb back up the mountain-side

with my young companion as best I could, when I heard the well-known voices, and the three stood before me again, calling out to me about all the fine things they had seen. As always happens, they had no idea that they had been away too long. I grumbled a little to myself; but the high spirits in which they had returned, and my herdsman's comical, incomprehensible leave-taking, restored me to my good humour. Merrily singing, our cavalcade rode up the mountain, and when we had once more reached the rocky ground upon which Ronda is built, we alighted from our steeds, and stared down with contentment along the mountain whose steep sides had afforded us so much that was fine to look at.

GRANADA

EARLY the next morning a rocking omnibus, drawn by four mules, was before the door to take us to the station, for we were now about to commence the finest part of our journey: Granada, the Alhambra, the Sierra Nevada. It was not a great distance, but the journey was, as usual, unnecessarily protracted and

slow. What was worse, it was raining; yes, the sky looked grey, and as we proceeded, the clouds gathered more and more closely.

Upon our arrival at Granada, we were met by rolling thunder, accompanied by torrents of rain. Once again the road to our hotel was a little journey in itself. The town lies in a hollow at the foot of the surrounding mountains, but the Alhambra portion is higher up. A steep ascent leads to where it stands, far above the low-lying city—a broad, well-kept road, planted on both sides with tall olive-trees, and containing two excellent hotels for tourists who can afford a little luxury. Charming rooms were placed at our service: I had a large, well-furnished sitting-room, with a view of the mountains, and a bedroom looking out upon the luxurious green of the garden. I threw the windows open wide; a flash of lightning, followed by a clap of thunder, bade me welcome to my new abode.

Downstairs, in the dining-room, sat a number of English travellers, young ladies and men; they were discussing a little anxiously what the storm would end in; but the gaily-dressed head-waiter, quick and fussy, insisted that it was only a *malo momento*, a passing mountain storm, which here generally cleared the atmosphere. "To-morrow you shall see something," he said, to the great contentment of us three; for how could we enjoy the Alhambra in the rain, with a grey sky?

Next day the head-waiter was loudly applauded. The weather was clear, the sky blue, and all things glittered in the sun.

THE ALHAMBRA

LIGHTLY clad, with cigarettes in our mouths, and armed with our long sticks, we started on our tramp to the Alhambra. The broad road leading up from the hotel takes you of itself to the high point on which the Moorish palace stands. This road offers all that one dreams of in connection with Granada: a broad, gentle ascent, with tall and stately trees on either hand, through which the distant landscape constantly changes. Below, next to you, above you, play the brooks that rush down from the snowy tops, to join the stream of the Darro below.

At last our road is obstructed by a tall and broad wall built of red brick. It is the first wall of the much-walled palace. A small gate admits us to the large and beautifully laid-out garden that serves as a fore-court to the Alhambra. At a large fountain near this entrance you are entertained in Spanish fashion with a big glass of mountain water and a small glass of anisette. You take a look round; this is really a fortified place, with turrets and loop-holes; there, in front of you, is another high, red-brick wall: that must be the Alhambra; but what is that heavy-looking building at the side, which has the air of a ruined European palace? It is one of history's tragedies. Charles V. intended to build a palace next

to "the wonder of the world," which should surpass the latter in architectural beauty; but it was never finished, and stands there stricken and neglected, a lasting proof of the tasteless apathy and tyranny of the princes of that time. Probably a portion of the Alhambra was pulled down to make room for it, and at present it spoils the appearance of the space by which the Alhambra is surrounded.

But the view of the Alhambra itself disappointed us even more, with its bare, dirty-red wall, where we had expected a magnificent façade. We said nothing, and passed through the entrance. This is a great gate, a building in itself, erected for the purposes of defence, and sloping upwards. At last we were within the building and stood still to take a general view. But this was difficult, for our attention was distracted by all sorts of details. Everything looked smaller to our eyes than we had expected. We stood in a gallery supported by short and very slender marble pillars, enclosing an open oblong, dug out in the middle to form a basin. The walls are covered with symbols and adornments of all kinds, which were probably at one time coloured. There were inscriptions in Arabic letters giving quotations from the Koran bearing on the government of the people. Passing from this gallery, you come to others, large and small, some of which afford unexpected little views of the mountains or of other halls and spaces. All of them have different inscriptions and ornamentations. One of the finest is that containing the famous Fountain of Lions: everything appears to be fashioned in white stucco inlaid with marble, and the ceilings, or rather low vaultings, are remarkably intricate in their designs,

presenting an appearance of fine lace-work or drooping veils.

We looked at each other somewhat disconsolately. In order to enjoy this marvel, one must be an architect, an antiquarian, or an historian; but for us, roaming about as laymen, it did not give us what we came to see. True, there are fine rows of pillars and galleries, there are water-basins surrounded by flat beds for flowers and plants, there are artistic decorations wherever you turn; but . . . this is the great "but": the colours of the letters and arabesques are effaced, the fountains do not play, there is no water in the basins, and in the tasteful flat borders around them lies, instead of the appropriate flowers and plants, a brown something that looks like peat-mould; the flat Oriental roofs have been replaced by Spanish roofs with red tiles; the eye is struck on all sides by a great iron bolt running along the graceful architrave to save it from falling in. There is no such thing as a bench or seat, for the former inhabitants had mats spread on the ground to rest upon, or low divans on which to take their meals.

Imagine that you hire a house which you liked; you saw how comfortably its inhabitants lived in it, how everything was in full use and flower. Now comes the day for you to take up your abode there, and you are shocked at the inhospitable appearance of your new dwelling. The rooms have become mere spaces, every trace is visible of damage done to floors and walls, and months, perhaps years, are necessary before a practised hand can restore to this house the appearance which once so greatly attracted you.

Now reflect—this fine remnant of Arabian archi-

tecture has been deserted for centuries by its Moorish inhabitants, and no one has lived there since their day; reflect that hundreds of indifferent people have visited it during that long period, breaking off portions or using them for a multitude of purposes. What can possibly remain save the construction and the visitor's imagination?

I went and sat at the foot of one of the pillars, upon the marble edge of one of the dry basins. What a sad impression, I thought, this beautiful building makes upon me. It is as though one had made a long journey to visit a much-admired woman: you knock, and all is still; you are admitted, and you find a corpse. There lies the noble head, but the kindly eyes are closed, the mouth opens no more, the beautiful hair which, brilliantly dressed and wreathed in flowers, held all in admiration, now lies straggling over the shoulders. You can still see the exquisite lines of the neck and bosom, but the body lies pale and motionless before you, and rather than give way to ecstasy at all this beauty, you burst into regrets for the life that once inspired it and now is gone for good.

I sat long thus, head in hand, musing in the *patio* of the Lion Fountain. Once I looked round and thought, Where are the singing-birds, which should be nestling in all this green? where are the praying-carpets, where the long Turkish pipes? where are the stands of arms, the shields, the plumes and banners? None of all this is to be seen; the bare walls stand faded and discoloured, the inscriptions have become illegible, the decorations almost invisible.

There was more to be visited: a small, dark staircase took us down to the bath-rooms. Here, when the

fair Scheherazade lay on a satin divan, not as now, when all is chill and dark, but when it smelt of myrrh and perfumed oils—that must have been fine. Then, through these conduits, scented water ran into the marble basins, and the Moorish king entered on soft slippers, while in the little music-gallery in the wall above eunuchs played softly to announce his arrival: all that must have been enchanting. But we, sober travellers, with our walking-shoes, with their unseemly clatter, our sticks and spectacles: what do we do here? We look at the open rosettes, artfully sculptured over our heads to admit the light. We long for this light, and soon leave these little underground cellars, preferring once more carefully to visit the little apartments above, in which we curiously examine the surprising lines of perspective presented by this mysterious building. I say mysterious, for it is now impossible to say what purpose this building served, or rather for what it was used. The hall known as that of the Ambassadors, that of the Two Sisters, or the one containing the Lion Fountain: none of these are able to bring before your imagination the life of the former inhabitants. You stand admiring petty details or closely inspecting decorations cunningly applied.

Yet there is one small room which you reach when you come to the end of the upper gallery. It has the pretty name of *el Mirador de la Reyna*—the Queen's Boudoir. Here you can imagine that the queen really sat: not by reason of the beauty of this low room, but because of the front, which is open to the air, supported only by a few slender pillars; for the exquisite charm of this so-called boudoir lies in its magnificent

view over the surrounding landscape, the Sierra Nevada and the Darro river. This is the landscape which Velasquez so often took for the back-ground of his portraits: the brown-grey mountains veined with silvery brooks, the clear blue sky with milk-white stripes. If you wish to know what is really fine about the Alhambra, it is the marvellous environment that arrests your glance through every window and doorway.

At some distance from the Alhambra, after a beautiful walk of about half-an-hour, you come to a small building in the same style, called the Generalife. This, too, is in a very ruinous condition; but there is a portion near the principal entrance, standing amid the surrounding garden, which is kept in preservation by the present owner. There again, as in the Alhambra, was an oblong basin bordered with white marble edges; but here fresh water streamed delightfully, and at the entrance, against the walls on either side of the door, stood tall rose-bushes with their crooked stems and bright blossoms. They gleamed with colour against the grey wall and reflected their hue and shape in the water at our feet. It was like a water-colour by Fortuny, as he with his delicate taste knew how to paint it, and it has remained in my memory as a thing that struck me with its beauty. Yes, I thought, if the Alhambra had only preserved its character in this way, we should in reality have seen something to remind us of the dreams of the thousand and one nights; but now, as it lies before us at present, it but brings to my lips the only Latin phrase I know: "*Sic transit gloria mundi.*"

GYPSIES

IN Granada the gypsies prevail in greater numbers than elsewhere in Spain: it is here they have their ghetto. There is a place called the Albaycin where they all live together; and further up in the mountains is a wonderful quarter which gives us a good idea of these wild, vivacious, and picturesque beings. Here they wander about alone or in bands, following all sorts of industries which cannot be classed under any business heading. We took one of them, who was roaming around the hotel and who had an interesting head, as our guide and introducer to his racial fellows.

He talked little, but understood us readily. He was quick in producing anything we needed, and he rode any animal as easily as a professional jockey or postillion.

One sunny morning we ordered a carriage to drive us to the Latin Quarter of the gypsies. We sat waiting on the steps of our hotel, which were protected by trees against the sun. Early or late, a troop of gypsy children would always be hovering around the doors of both the hotels. Lively little brown figures, poorly clad, but with now and again a red or blue ribbon twisted in their tangled hair. Dancing and hopping about, playing all sorts of gymnastic pranks, they come down upon you with the true beggar's indifference to a snarling word, and keep on returning to the same spot, like flies. Whether you give them anything or not, it is all the same, for others come in their turn, tumbling or singing before you. We were glad when Bartok, as our *protégé* was called, came driving up with his team. It was a basket-carriage drawn by four steeds, one sorrier than the other, a conveyance of Bartok's own invention. We were laughed at a little by the bystanders, but we were in Don Quixote's country, and thought this pleasanter than to drive about Granada behind a straight-backed coachman with silver buttons and prancing horses. The gypsy children kept on shouting and begging around us until our team of four trotted on; but so soon as we had started, we saw that one of them had clambered on to the box next to Bartok, our driver.

We called to him to stop, and he climbed down to ask what the *señores* wanted.

"Bartok," I asked, "who told you to let that little girl sit on the box?"

"*Perdon, señor,*" he replied, "but she takes up no room, and is not in the way."

"Very likely; but excuse me if I say that I am a little shy of those brats, and do not care to become acquainted with the company they carry about with them."

"*Perdon, señor,*" he repeated, "she is only going to ride a little way."

"But, my man, a child like *that!*"

"Oh," he said, and took off his hat with a sweeping bow to put us in a gentler mood, "the little one is my daughter, *señores*, and she asked her father if he would not for once take her for a drive in a carriage."

Of course there was no more to be said, and we drove on merrily, down the broad road, and through Granada to the Darro, the river which runs through it. Along its bank, which is full of rocks and lumpy stones, there are houses and streets, the latter paved with terrible cobbles, very difficult for an aged pedestrian like myself, and enormous even for a Spanish town.

This quarter of the town, which is called the Albaycin, is a remarkable instance of an apparently useless piece of ground made habitable. In the middle of it, far below the footpath, runs the river, which divides the two overhanging mountains; a narrow bridge connects the two opposite quarters, and the irregular dwelling-houses and unsymmetrical ground seem to harmonize into one mass of inhabited rocks. Here and there you see a touch of white—shirts hung up to dry—or a patch or two of colour, produced by clothes hanging from the windows.

This part of the Albaycin is right up against the mountains, and it is here that the poorer division of the colony live. Nothing more primitive than their dwellings. At the foot of a prominent eminence, the rock is simply cut out to a depth sufficient to provide accommodation for a family. Doors and windows are not necessary: when it rains, a shawl is hung before the entrance. We stopped at Bartok's home. The sun shone straight into the grotto. Red cloths covered the tables and beds, and little mirrors and knick-knacks were hung up on every side. The inner wall of the rock itself was washed blue. There was no fire-place, as all the cooking is done in the open air; near the entrance lay a heap of linen ready for hanging up. The charming lady of the house, a great, black harridan, pulled the child from the box, screamed something into her ear, and gave her a couple of thumps, presumably because she had brought nothing back with her; then she fell upon her husband for not at once producing some money, now that he had come driving up with such gentlemen as ourselves. Screaming and shrieking, she began to call in the neighbours, and Bartok had a hard time of it; but when the quarrel began to exceed all limits and threatened to develop into a general free fight, I pushed in amid the horde and thrust some silver into the hand of the fair dame, who withdrew, grumbling, and but half satisfied. This incident, which lasted but a moment, had entertained us vastly; the wildness and rapacity of these people, the indescribable disorder that reigned before the aperture effected in the beetling background: all this was in keeping, and was warmly coloured by the brilliant rays of the sun.

Meantime Bartok was glad to climb back to his box and to whip up his fiery steeds once more. We drove further into the mountains. Here the hovels and their inhabitants seemed to me still wilder than those on the high-road; and although my companion laughed at my fears, I began to find the quarter a little too close, and to wonder if there was any danger of robbery or murder. I called to Bartok to turn back or to reach the city by the shortest road. But thereupon Bartok got down and asked whether we would not visit the Gypsy Captain, who lived in the Albaycin, and who could organize a special dance for us. My objections were disregarded, and when, on returning to the gypsy town, we pulled up at a remote corner, I thought the place very *polizeiwidrig*. This corner or promontory in the rock was very steep, and showed nothing but bare walls; one of them had a door to it. Our guide crawled up the steep boulders with some difficulty and repeatedly knocked at this solitary door. At last we heard a grating noise, the door opened, and the head of a very old little fellow came peeping round the corner to see if there was anything wrong; but when he saw Bartok's familiar features he emerged into the light of day. He proved to be an old but sturdy rascal, who had probably come to look prematurely aged by long habits of drink and begging. He had put on a green felt hat adorned with tassels, which constituted his only uniform; for he wore a shirt full of holes round his bony black neck and body, while a pair of tight, red-striped trousers and a short, thick stick, which he waved incessantly to and fro, completed his costume. Negotiations were now entered upon between the captain and the gypsy,

one with his stick, the other with gestures of hands and head. The man tried to talk to us himself, but we could only answer with laughter, and so we let our native guide arrange the matter for us.

It was a strange progress in the evening through this wild quarter, illumined here and there by a dim, quivering lantern, the lights in the little houses shining like tiny stars amid the irregular rocks. Aided by our guide and leaning on our sticks, we climbed up the difficult stony ascent to the captain's house. The entrance gave us no very favourable idea of what we should find, nor were we mistaken in our anticipation. A small staircase led to a poverty-stricken apartment furnished with nothing but a few chairs and a dilapidated divan running along the wall. *El capitan* did not appear, but some girls well out of their teens, with sly and hungry faces, poorly clad, but with a few flowers in their hair, sat on the divan and the floor. They leaped up with a single bound to welcome us. Bartok took a seat on the ground, in the middle of the red-tiled floor, and with a tambourine in one hand and a pair of castagnettes in the other he marked the rhythm of the dance, which was executed by the girls with great wide steps and varied movements of the body to the measure of the music. Soon drinks were brought in, and when the dance was over, the company, gathering more closely around us than we cared for, pressed us to send for all kinds of further victuals and drink. Great joy in the *corps-de-ballet* when we consented. The wine and the food speedily took effect, the tambourine rang out anew, and a very active dance was executed with shouts and cries. The dancers stamped upon the floor, sang furiously out of tune,

and at last fell down heated and fatigued by our side. Now and again one would hold out her hand and with a pitiful face beg for an alms for herself; some cautiously tried to slip their hands into our waistcoat or trousers pockets; finally the whole band whirled around us, clamouring aloud for money and presents.

I was glad when my companions themselves at last began to grow a little timid and anxious. We all rose to go, but were stayed by the mass of outstretched arms and hands. There was no escape possible, and we let them plunder us of the little we had on us. When at last they allowed us to depart, and we expressed our dissatisfaction to Bartok in no minced words, "*Sono pobres, señores,*" he said, shrugging his shoulders, "*sono pòbres!*"

A SOLITARY WALK

THE next morning early, I escaped from my travelling-companions and went for a walk alone on the sunny mountain-road.

The city lay below, in a steam of heat, but here everything gleamed with moisture and sunshine. I walked up the broad road towards the Alhambra, and when I had gone some distance, to a spot where one has an extensive view of the snow-tops above and the high-road below, I saw a big stone bench between two giant cypress-trees. I sank down upon it; it was a dreamy spot; now and then I closed my eyes, the better to hear the buzzing in the branches overhead, the clatter of the river, which I could not see, and the chirruping and singing all around me. Then again I would look up at the bold line of the mountains, at the city and its environs, all sharply designed against the sky, or down to where the Darro gave glimpses of itself among the rocks. Occasionally a carriage or some pedestrians would go by, on their way from the hotels below or the Alhambra above; but as I was sitting with my back to the road, they passed unperceived by me. I looked up, therefore, in surprise when a young lady, whom I had seen before at my hotel, armed with a single eye-glass, a large parasol, a box of paints, and a portfolio, sat down upon

my bench. When she had put down her parasol and further ballast, I saw that the arrival of this English miss had put an end to the hermit's part I was playing; she was clearly tired of walking and determined to rest by my side.

Ah, I thought, "a young colleague," plucked up courage to address her, and was pleased to find that she was not too prudish to reply. I began to talk of how easily one grew tired when walking up and down in this place, especially if one wanted to work.

"Yes," she replied. "My family are driving about the neighbourhood, but I thought I would go and romance a little by myself. They are going to pick me up here."

She was very pretty in her little grey costume, with her loose, fair curls, on which a charming little hat was pinned; even the glass which she wore screwed in one eye did not look bad. After staring for a little while at the view, she turned to me again.

"Sir," she said, "you are one of the Dutch painters, are you not, staying at the same hotel where we are?"

I nodded.

"Ah," said she, "you could do me a great favour, if you would."

I looked up, astonished, but she had already drawn some sheets from her portfolio, and timidly laughing, said:

"Will you think me very indiscreet if I show you my drawings? I should so much like to have an artist's opinion on my work."

"Certainly," I said, "if you wish it. It will not be the first time I have had that request made me."

I examined the drawings she spread before me:

they were wonderful sketches! I looked at one, I looked at the other, and was at an absolute loss what to say.

"May I explain them to you?" she asked, after I had long hesitated. "The title of this one is, as you see written on it: 'Thoughts on Observing Nature.'"

"Ah yes!" said I, and I understood that I had a little *fin-de-siècle* before me.

"These long grey lines," she remarked, "exemplify the endlessness of space, far away and vague, and those waved red stripes round about are the thoughts which go up and down and in all directions. On this drawing you see, 'Hope in the Future.' You see those big ascending green lines: they symbolize inquiry, always hopeful, striving, and that very fine line, in which those rays end, is the distant, all-enlightening future."

"Very nice," I said; "thank you kindly for showing them to me;" but she took them back somewhat doubtfully, and said with a sigh:

"I fear you don't think they express their meaning clearly; after all, I believe that old painters do not care for this manner."

"Oh, you are mistaken," I cried. "I like everything in which I see anything interesting or beautiful, but . . . very often I don't see it."

She went on chattering, and said:

"We have a little club in which we talk nothing but art. We try to create a different art from that of the ordinary picture. You know, merely to copy nature always is *vieux jeu;* we only use nature in order to find symbols for our thoughts, and then . . . painting from nature is so difficult, much too difficult

for us girls." She produced a pretty scent-bottle and sniffed at it. "I have been a little upset," she said, "by a book I am reading, *Sorrows of the Night*, it's so delightfully touching."

She wiped away a little tear, and sniffed violently at her scent-bottle.

"Come, come," I said, "I am glad, at least, to see that your complexion has not suffered from all this sentiment."

She looked up gaily, with an air of great relief.

"Do you think so?" she asked. "I was really afraid I was beginning to look old; now you don't know me, and are impartial, and a compliment really does me good. My friends already say that this hat is too smart for me."

"Not in the least," I cried; "it suits you perfectly, and it finishes off your costume admirably."

"Oh," she exclaimed, delighted, "you ought to see me in my new evening frock; I know you'd like that."

Our conversation was at last growing really interesting. She wanted to tell me what it was like, and ever so much more, when alas, there came a sound of wheels, a carriage stopped where we were sitting, and our talk was at an end: she looked round, gave me her hand, jumped into the carriage, and she was gone, taking her pleasant personality with her.

Once more I sat alone. Charmed by the beauty of the spot, I stayed a few minutes longer. The music of the humming-bees, the chirruping crickets, and the soft murmur of the thousands of leaves above my head, gave me a sort of intoxication which almost sent me to sleep. I shook myself awake, and returned quickly to my hotel. My sunny road was streaked with broad

patches of shadow, which moved to and fro, uniting and going asunder again. But whenever I strayed to the right or left of the high-road, I saw the lofty mountain-tops in the distance, covered with downy snow, through which the sun shone upon little streams meandering in threads of silver. Below this came tints of rose and brown, until the eye rested upon the grey-green slopes, relieved by groups of trees of a darker green, and displaying villas of all sizes and shapes, whose white walls and turrets stood out clearly against the undulating background, with its dark patches of shadow.

As I approached the hotel, the pretty little English girl appeared before my imagination again, and I hoped to renew my pleasant chat with her after lunch; but it was not to be. Before the door of the hotel stood a large omnibus, laden with trunks and portmanteaus. A whole family was grouped around it, preparing to drive off, and my pupil among them. She waved her hand to me with a smile, and spoke of me to her friends, who gravely bowed and raised their hats. I politely bowed my acknowledgments and sadly entered the hotel, reflecting that this was another acquaintance of whom I should never hear again.

IN THE MOUNTAINS

MY friends at lunch were in raptures over their expedition in the mountains. My son wanted to repeat the trip at once with me; but our poet felt very tired, and was afraid of fatiguing himself still more, so that he preferred to go to bed, as he often did. There he lay between the sheets, smoking a long pipe which rested on a table by his side, with a sheet of paper and a pencil in his fingers, jotting down an observation or idea as it occurred to him, and slumbering in between. In this way he would produce but a few, occasional sentences; but these were invariably well-observed and exquisitely polished in style.

Shortly after lunch my mount appeared before the door, consisting of a handsome grey ass, with a very comfortable-looking side-saddle. A Murillo boy held the bridle, and my son stood in front, with a long whip in his hand, like a ring-master. The young donkey-driver had his head crammed with roads, which he knew thoroughly: some that took three days, covering the whole mountain; others that lasted a day and night. But it was arranged that our excursion was to be over in four hours.

This riding on donkey-back had charmed me from the commencement. I only regretted not understand-

ing the language in which our driver communicated his thoughts to the donkey. I never learned what "Hoot tooy!" meant, or "Pirr hé!" or "Hot, hot!"

Onward we went, leaving the high-road for a gently-sloping lower portion of the valley, whence we soon struck a steeper road, which ran upwards for a long distance. This was a poor part of the trip, without any view or interest. Here and there stood half-ruined houses, including a hospital blistered by the sun. But presently it became better, the road grew rich in plants and luxuriant trees, and as we went higher the ground became covered with red and yellow flowers. These were replaced in their turn by ragged moss and stones, and at last we attained the view over the vast extent of the *sierra*, which was outlined in undulating hills with great, deep shadows, and topped by the snow-caps high up against the sky. Here we reached a plateau affording a view of the whole glittering range of snow-clad mountains, which stood before us in their varied shapes, round or sharply pointed. Here and there the thunder rolled through space, for the air was full of clouds; mists rose and glided over the mountain-tops, concealing them from view, or splitting them into extraordinary sections. The finest sight was when the great shadows of the clouds came driving over the ground, suddenly disappearing, and then returning. Sometimes we were hemmed in by dark patches of shadow, and the next moment they would speed past, and the mobile landscape became a wonderful tournament of gleams of light pursued by shadowy giants. Then the thunder would sound again, or with a strange roar great heaps of snow roll down the

mountain-side; the wind blew violently around us, and despite the powerful sunshine the air was cold and biting.

"Do you see a cross standing near that withered tree?" whispered the donkey-driver. "There is a large hole there. A saint was murdered there and flung into the hole; I should not like to be here late at night; they say there are ghosts."

"Look," I cried, "that's very curious: there come the ghosts, out of that dark corner."

The frightened lad buried his head in my saddle.

A great, silvery cloud had detached itself in flakes from the rest, and came sailing straight down upon us. It was a regular ghostly shape, moving as though with arms and legs, and followed by other mists, which passed above our heads.

"It's all right, Pedro," I said; "they're gone."

"Oh," he cried, "if I had been alone, I should have died of fright!"

The majority of mountain-dwellers are afflicted with spectres and witches, and in truth, as we stood here in this endless wilderness, amid this incessant wind, which often, at this height, increases to a raging storm, we could easily understand how the inhabitants of these regions give way to the superstition that things happen here at night which no one who has the misfortune to be present escapes.

We had approached the road that leads up to the glaciers, but here we turned back, leaving it to others to admire these natural wonders more closely. We began the descent, and leaving the bare mountain-side, on which there was no sign of a footprint visible, we came to a path with small verdured slopes on either

side, leading to a spot from which we saw the city of Granada and the Alhambra spread out before us like a panorama. The sun was setting, and as we descended by the river's bank, the water and the sky were gold, the surrounding rocks dark emerald, and all the trees, the villas, and our hotel were wrapped in melting rose.

When the last King of Granada was driven by conquest from his capital and the Alhambra, he heaved a deep sigh and wept. On the spot where he shed these tears a monument was raised which to this day is known as "The Moor's Last Sigh." For us no monument will be raised, though we too bid a sad farewell to the place where we had seen so much that was new and beautiful, and where we had wandered in an ideal world. Now we had a wretched twenty-four hours' railway journey before us, in order to travel straight from Granada to Madrid. We sent to secure a sleeping-carriage or a separate compartment, which alone would make this tedious journey endurable.

Our hotel porter and the railway officials sought in vain, and at last, at our wits' end, we sent for the station-master. After a long search, this functionary was produced. He came lounging along with true Spanish indifference. His hands were in the pockets of his wide trousers, a cigarette hung from below his ragged moustache, his red cap lay tilted back on his woolly, grey head, as though it annoyed him to have to wear this, the only, symbol of his office. He re-assured us, and with an air betokening that everything was always in order where he was concerned, strolled away again. After some delay, he sent for us to come to him. He had had a mail-carriage cleared for us;

it contained just three seats, a looking-glass, and a little table on hinges. We were saved. We could dress and undress undisturbed. We could smoke and let in as much fresh air as we pleased; the floor was our bedstead, the table our dining-room; the mirror served to show us how sadly our toilet needed attention.

Wine, chickens, hard-boiled eggs and bread were acquired for the journey; we bought three tumblers; and newspapers were improvised into napkins and table-cloths. But we discovered later that to dissect and consume cold fowl without plates, knives, and forks, demanded an aptitude with which we were not prepared; but we took example by the Moors we had visited, and all three squatting on the floor, we pulled off in turn what we needed, so far as bones and sinews would permit, and devoured our chickens in this primitive manner. With our loose travelling-wraps floating about our lightly-clad bodies, we did not look so unlike a troop of True Believers. I seem to remember that we ate and drank more than was absolutely necessary; at least we reached the capital in a very jolly condition, and did not understand what the guard wanted when he told us that we must alight.

MADRID REVISITED

THE big town, with its own peculiar noise and movement, welcomed us once more among its many guests, and we climbed into an omnibus and felt as much at home as though we had lived in Madrid for years.

A sad accident had taken place during our absence. The greatest of bull-fighters, the adored Espartero, had been killed by an unexpected thrust from a huge bull in the Plaza de Toros, in the presence of clamouring and applauding thousands. His photographs hung in every shop-window, in plain dress, in bull-fighter's costume, and on his death-bed, surrounded by flowers

and laurel-wreaths. Posters with mourning borders announced the titles of pamphlets and poems upon Espartero and his tragic death. All the newspapers contained verses and pictures illustrating the leading incidents in the dead hero's career.

At a corner of the Calle San Geronimo, which swarms with strollers between five and six o'clock in the evening, a crowd had collected round a blind singer. It was an old woman, with a brown, wrinkled skin; a long, grey shawl covered her shoulders, but big, yellow flowers were twisted into her grey hair. She sang a song on Espartero, bemourning the great man's fate, and at the same time presented to her audience a basket containing matches, printed ballads, and sweetmeats. The guitar accompaniment was executed by a dark-eyed child. But the most interesting feature was the audience, which listened eagerly to the singing, and bought the ballad which was the topic of the day: a badly-printed broadsheet adorned with a wonderful smeared wood-cut, supposed to represent a man being crushed by a bull. It bore no price; every one threw what he pleased into a little tin dish that stood in the basket. One young lady was greatly moved; she was a kinswoman of the famous man's, and told the bystanders all sorts of things that I could not understand. She pulled a photograph from her pocket and displayed it. The whole circle came crowding round her to admire it. A poor woman, with a child on her arm, made the child lean forward and imprint a tender salute upon the portrait of the worshipped bull-fighter, and then triumphantly turned round to receive the acclamations of the surrounding audience.

In the evening we visited a popular theatre. It

was a difficult matter to find our way through the steep, badly-paved streets, dark as night, and swarming with busy or loitering groups. When we arrived it was busier than ever. Hawkers, visitors, idlers jostled each other in a continuous whirl; for what makes the confusion here so great is that one only pays to see one piece. They usually give three or four in an evening; so that those who are leaving after seeing one piece run up against those who wish to see the next. By dint of much pushing and wriggling we reached the pay-box. You can understand that the tickets are cheap for each piece, and the price is certainly very small for the excellent acting that we saw. The auditorium itself is an unpleasant hole, with no attempt at decoration or comfort. The Spaniards on the whole do not appear to pay much attention to these. The drop-curtain was quite plain, and was raised after a short wait.

The play was very amusing. A fiery old general is in love with a frivolous little milliner, and although he is entitled to regard her as his mistress, he thinks that he has all sorts of reasons to suspect her of making a fool of him. Half-crying, half-laughing, she beseeches him to desist from accusing her of infidelity. This *rôle* of Nicolette was so prettily and wittily played, she petted and caressed the old grumbler so delightfully, that the audience roared and roared again with laughter and applause. At last the general lights upon the man he suspects, and is about to inflict chastisement upon him, when to his great dismay he learns that he is in a false position, and that he is in the presence of the lawful spouse of his *inamorata*. Great consternation on the part of all three, until the charming lady succeeds

in persuading her husband that the general is an old friend of her father, that he had, in fact, once saved that worthy's life, and that he is bound therefore to visit her from time to time. The whole thing was played briskly, clearly, and merrily, and with considerable natural and unaffected talent.

We also visited the great Royal Library, and as we came provided with a letter of introduction from a well-known literary man, we were shown in to the principal librarian. It took some time before all the ceremonies had been observed, and we were walked through a number of rooms filled with thousands of volumes. At last we reached a large and lofty apartment. Near a tall casement, opening on to a sunny garden, sat a clerical gentleman in a long black cassock. His bald skull shone in the sunlight; he was a real model for the gloomy Ribera. With a stately gesture he bade us be seated and asked what books or manuscripts we wished to see. But that was not our object; it would take long to make a choice out of so many books, and besides, we were travelling, and were not inclined to sit down and read. But we asked for the collection of prints, and were taken along a quantity of stairs and galleries to the print-rooms. Here the keeper asked us what he could show us, and I remembered my friend Van Witsen's injunction on no account to miss the bequest which a certain Conquerra had made to the Spanish State. When I had uttered this request, the keeper of the prints flung his arms in the air, and exclaimed:

"That is eighteen hundred portfolios full! I can't possibly show you all of them; we are still busy arranging them. But," he continued, politely handing

us chairs, and growing calmer as he spoke, "make a choice: which do you wish most to see?"

We asked for one thing and another: Dürer's wood-cuts, Goya's etchings. That was easily done; he had exquisite proofs of the very best impressions. But now I realized why there were so many hundred portfolios filled with this bequest. Each portfolio contained ten or fifteen prints and was filled up with blotting and tissue paper, and I thought to myself that, had it been left to me, I could easily have reduced the eighteen to one hundred. But that is just like Spain: everything must always be done in the large and grandiose manner; everything must be made to take up room. True, there is always room for everything.

In the same way, the Royal Palace is enormous, and is surrounded by parks, gardens, and walls, which turn it into a sort of town in the midst of this large city. As the clock is on the stroke of noon, a royal parade takes place, and the court-yard is full of soldiers and lookers-on. Flags and banners of every shape and colour appear at all the towers and balconies, and a glittering staff of mounted officers and subalterns is drawn up on horseback before the palace to receive commands from adjutants who trot in and out of the gate. There is as much fuss as though a revolution were imminent. Suddenly the great palace clock strikes twelve; forty horsemen with long silver trumpets sound a signal, and a military band strikes up. They seemed to me to play with great spirit, and the listening multitude repeatedly applauded, and cheered the little King, who appeared at one of the windows.

It was a very royal display; and when the King's carriages drive past, drawn by I don't know how many horses, and escorted in front, at the sides, and behind by glittering lackeys in old-fashioned gala liveries, with the horses and coachmen adorned with flowers and ribbons, brocade and gold-lace, one would almost believe that the great days of the Royal House of Spain are not yet past.

TO VALENCIA

AT last we took leave of Madrid; our plan was to travel to Valencia, next to visit Barcelona, and then return to France. And so we were on our way north. Yet our route was but northerly by comparison; for if there is anything warm and southern, full of colour, life, and vegetation, it is the road from Madrid to Valencia.

After the train has left Madrid, which, with its large buildings, its tall steeples and numerous suburbs, remains, even at a distance, a city of wide lines, it crosses the little Manzanares. A small river indeed;

yet with its winding banks, along which grow stately trees, and the wonderful water-lilies covering its surface, this little river looked very entrancing; and I thought what a charming walk it must be, of an evening, along its banks. But the train, as usual, tore us cruelly away, while striving to console us by ever offering something new to our view. Quarries appeared, where we saw men loading carts and vans with freestone. Then we flew across the Tagus, and passed along corn-fields, surrounded by fruit-trees, till we came to Aranjuez, sung by Schiller. The train stopped here for a while. It is a high-lying town, which, with its white walls and steeples, seemed to hang in mid-air, so deep and clear were the hues of the surrounding hills, which give glimpses of the little town through the trees. We saw school-children walking along the road, the little ones first, then the elders, escorted by two teachers, nuns from a neighbouring convent, tall and stately figures in black, with stiff, white head-dresses; a crucifix hung at their knees from a long cord. We heard sounds of singing, but the noise of the engine drowned everything as we steamed away again.

Salt lakes came next, as though to show us something quite new, the edges of the water white with salt. A little further, wide spaces, with herds of great bulls, and then a vast extent covered with wind-mills, yes, wind-mills, and more adapted for fighting purposes than ours at home. But one is constantly being reminded of Don Quixote when travelling in Spain; and Sancho Panza and the Knight himself figure in the crowds at every turn.

It grows pitch dark: we are in a tunnel, a long,

cold tunnel, and the train, which never runs particularly fast, goes slower than ever. But ah, when we emerge! Olive-trees by hundreds grow along the road and surround the rice-fields, which are intersected by little glistening streams of water; and then at last we enter Valencia, which really deserves the name which the Spaniards give it: *Huerta de l'España*, the Garden of Spain. Here aloes point their prickly foliage through the grey rocks, and roses grow wild on every hand. Palm-trees lift their curious crowns on high, and orange and citron-trees, green and gold, line the road-sides. It is amid such surroundings that the city of Valencia is approached.

THE CID

AS I walked the streets of Valencia, I looked out on every side for busts and statues of the Cid, for the town is called Valencia del Cid. This is the place of his deeds of heroism, celebrated in song and story; but in none of the tortuous streets, in no market-place, could I find a trace of any monument. The town struck me as very ancient, lively and full of movement; but as far as the Cid was concerned, I had to wait until I returned to my room at the hotel. Here, above the wash-hand stand, between two small mirrors, hung a little old print, with the inscription, "*Ruy Diaz de Bivar*," and below, in large letters, "*El Cid Campeador.*"

In this way my good genius sought to comfort me and to allay my anxiety for the fame of the Cid; but this stupid portrait, when compared with the great heroic poems, with Herder's *Cid*, and Heine's poem, and Corneille's tragedy, was little indeed. The Cid Campeador had snatched this fair province of Valencia from the Moors. He was the idol of his followers and soldiers and the terror of the Moors. For years the latter invested the district, without ever succeeding in recapturing the city. The legend relates how, when the Cid lay dead, the Moors suddenly mustered their troops and marched against the town, for the Cid, their

great adversary, was no more. All fled before them, and the few officers and soldiers within the walls saw themselves surrounded without hope of relief. Then suddenly one of them thought of setting up the dead Cid in full armour on his famous horse Babieca; and

the fear of the well-known figure, seated on its colossal steed, worked so powerfully upon the imagination of the Moors that they were driven back and the little Spanish force found an outlet and escape.

Valencia is full of colour and light; so much light indeed that the narrow, crooked streets are covered with all sorts of cloths against the sun, stretching from

one gable to the other. These great patches of shadow give a very unusual appearance to the streets. Our hotel had a large canvas blind, beneath which the café was kept. I used to select a comfortable chair (not easily found in a Spanish café), and have it placed on the pavement, so that I could watch all the movement and people in the street. It was certainly worth while. Never did I see beggars, monks, and dignitaries of the Church in such great numbers and variety. There must have been a seminary in the neighbourhood, for I would see troops of young men in black cassocks, with scapulars and bare heads, walking past my café. Now and then a lord spiritual would come into view. One caught my attention more than the rest. He carried his voluminous figure with long and stately steps; on his large nose a *pince-nez* sat enthroned between the fat, fleshy, grey eyebrows; he had a wide mouth and hanging cheeks, culminating in a long series of double chins and wide wrinkles and folds: a tempting model for a painter.

That is the worst of our calling: you are struck by something you see, and it is gone before you can properly study it. A hundred obstacles present themselves when you try to grasp a living subject. This solemn dignitary would have crushed me with a scornful glance if I had ventured to come to him with a proposal. I was, however, glad to have seen him, and followed him to a long distance with my eyes, as a delightful prey that had escaped me. I saw one or two others, but none so magnificent as the first.

Now came beggars; these were just what I did not want, and they refused to go away. A middle-aged spinster with a card on which, beneath a coronet, stood

full particulars of her long descent: I gave her something. Then a repulsive shrivelled arm was held out to me by a man on crutches: I gave something again. But now I saw a whole file coming up to me, and I remembered that a Spaniard once told me that the beggars divide strangers into fruit-trees and trees with nothing but leaves. They shake the fruit-trees till there is nothing left on them; the others they leave alone. So soon as you give one of them something, your reputation is made, and you can rely upon it that they will never leave you alone. And so I had to give up sitting in the street at Valencia.

It is a cheerful city. The Spanish reserve is less noticeable here in public than elsewhere. The market-place in particular is the centre of lively movement. The numbers of things exposed for sale! The part that attracted us most was where, beneath huge parasols, stood rows of barrows breathing the delicious perfumes of piles of various fruits. Such splendid reds and greens and yellows! We often stood looking and wondering at the strange fruit before us, which we either did not know or had not imagined in such forms. Lemons as large as ostrich-eggs; bananas, long, yellow, and excellently ripe; glowing Spanish pepper in large quantities; white almonds in their natural husks; olives, figs, pomegranates, which, when cut open, looked like boxes filled with comfits. Now and then we would buy something and eat it in the crowd as we went, to the great amazement and amusement of the many ladies and servant-girls who come here to make their morning purchases. Whether because they were stung by some of the thousands of flies that buzzed around, or pinched in the arm by

the young men, these girls all betrayed great liveliness and merriment. They were mostly coquettishly dressed, knowing that they formed an even more attractive feature of the market than the wares offered for sale. They carried their mantillas on their arms with a studied grace, or after arranging them on their heads allowed them to slip down on their shoulders. The wealth and glow of their hair, invariably adorned with a rose, and their flowered bodices, caused one to overlook their imitation rings and bracelets. But their chief charm lay in the elegance of their movements, the distinction of their coming and going and turning and standing; and the old women who sat behind the baskets, the merchants with their weights and scales, were full of fun and frolic while packing up the things they sold.

Amid all this bustle of buying and selling, I saw yet another instance of the charity and cheerful generosity which is so typical of the Spaniards. Shuffling step by step along the rows of barrows, came a young-looking man, leaning upon and guided by a young woman. Each carried a big basket hung over his back by a strap.

"Who are those?" I asked the fat old market-woman who was serving us.

"Oh, that couple over there? *Señores*, the worst evil the saints can send one is blindness. Pedro Rotiño has only been married six months to the Señorita Lafrado, and one unlucky morning he had a vision and has been stark-blind ever since. Come here, Alina!" she cried, made a grab at her wares, and flung two handfuls into the unhappy pair's baskets. They met with the same reception on every hand.

Every one gave something until the baskets were full, and not only the baskets, but the man's coat-pockets, and the hands of both; and all this accompanied by pitying faces and kindly speeches: an impulsive and emotional people.

Of course we had to visit the cathedral. There was to be a special *Miserere* sung that day, and in the afternoon, when it was too warm for walking, we went to hear it. It was deliciously cool. We were a little early; the congregation had not commenced to arrive, but the church was full of admirable decorations, beautiful pictures, tombs, and statues. The great fault here, as in all the churches, was that it was too dark to see anything. The pictures are hung much too high and in the dark, sometimes surrounded by lighted tapers, and sometimes hidden behind curtains, which are only drawn by special request. We had some difficulty in suppressing our annoyance, but went and sat down patiently on a richly-carved bench near the altar; it was not until later, when we were sent away, that we realized that this was the seat of the officiating clergy.

Presently there entered, genuflecting, a little acolyte in red and white; it appeared to be his duty to prepare the place for the service; he moved the benches, dusted the floor, and put the prayer-books in their places. He then came to a great sculptured lectern, the lower portion of which contained the heavy, brass-bound church-books. One of these had to be laid upon the desk above, but pull and try as he might, he could not lift it. I made a sign to my son to go and help the boy, and between them they hoisted the ponderous volume from its hiding-place to the top of

the lectern. He next helped him, at his request, to move an enormous copper holy-water stoup; climbed a ladder for him in order to pull a curtain from before an altar-picture, which the boy could not reach, and also to light the tall candles on the altar. The boy laughed and said contentedly that generally, when it was his turn to do these things, he had to call in the old sacristan, who always grumbled at him, and drove him away. And in this way a son of the Chosen People helped to set the Catholic Church in order; and as I watched those two lads, I thought how absurd it was that people should be so hostile towards each other over the service of a Being of Whom we mortals know so little.

The church began to fill, and we were expelled from our lofty seats by a beadle with his silver chains on his breast and his tall drum-major's cane in his hand. We found seats lower down among the congregation, and the music began. Heavy men's voices spoke rather than sang; these were answered by other basses, as though they were holding a loud and important conversation. The all-overpowering organ enjoined silence upon them; but no sooner had this ceased, than they began all over again, with the same wailing tones, the same cries of despair, and the same moaning of the organ. It began to grow terribly warm and oppressive. At last they stopped, and then it was as though a curtain had been drawn aside from the Holy of Holies, for from the loft facing the organ came an introduction on harps and violins, and softly and slowly, a sweet choir of children's voices entoned a beautiful, consoling hymn. It had the sound of clear silver water which, moved by the wind, murmurs

softly between flowering banks. We breathed more freely, and were commencing heartily to enjoy the music, of which it seemed as though we could never hear enough, when alas! a man ascended the pulpit —I could have dragged him out of it!—spoke some sentences in Latin, and see, the basses began their grumbling conversation all over again, and the organ growled and lamented till the whole church creaked. Who knows how long it lasted? We left the tall cathedral on tip-toe, and went for a walk in the Alameda, where it was cool, and green, and delightful.

TO BARCELONA

ONCE on the road to Barcelona, the trains go a little faster, and stop at fewer small stations; we can feel that we are travelling to an important manufacturing and commercial town. The railway passed, as usual, between charming woods of olive-trees and along chesnut-covered heights, similar to those which we had admired before reaching Valencia. At Tortosa we alighted for a moment to greet the Ebro, the classical river of Spain. I remembered how, as boys in the cold, ugly drawing-school, we used often to sing that well-known song:

"Fern im Süd das schöne Spanien,
Spanien ist mein Heimathland,
Wo die schattigen Kastanien
Rauschen an des Ebro Strand;"

and now that I was here, I could understand how the poet imagined a Spanish boy who felt home-sick in the North for this warm and richly-coloured land.

On returning to our compartment, we found that we had acquired a splendid officer, in full dress, as a travelling-companion. He was a soldier of a certain age, but with a fine head, brown from exposure to the sun, all save his forehead, which looked very white by comparison, and his hair, which was iron-grey. He had taken off his cap for coolness, and placed it by

his side, while his sword rested across his knees. We chatted eagerly of the fine view we had seen, produced cigarettes, and, as is the custom here, handed the box to the follower of Mars.

"*Gracias, señor,*" he said, taking one. "I am much obliged, for I happen to have left my own case behind; thanks."

We pressed him to take some more out of our supply; and as the Spaniards look upon cigarettes as almost common property, he helped himself to a few, rolled them in a piece of paper, and we soon became friends.

"You seem to be speaking a Northern tongue," he said; "is that so? I understand a little French and German, but of what you speak, not a word."

We told him we were talking Dutch.

"Ah!" he cried. "*Holanda!* I know Holland very well; that is to say," he added, laughing, "from my maps. I know your lines between Utrecht and Amsterdam. And how are things with the Zuider Zee: is that drained yet?"

We sat amazed at hearing this Spanish whiskerando talk in the land of olives and citrons about Amsterdam and the Zuider Zee.

"You must not be surprised to hear me talk of that. We have to know a little of the world around us, and your little country, with its important neighbours and its curious means of defence, is always a special subject of study with us."

We expressed our satisfaction at finding that the Netherlands did not count for nothing in the military life of Europe, and gradually the conversation turned to Gibraltar, and how it came about

that this remained in the occupation of the English. The question worked upon our fellow-traveller like an electric shock.

"Never talk to me," he said, "of Gibraltar, for that is more than we can bear. Fortunately we don't think about it, for otherwise there would be no rest and peace in the country, and before Gibraltar became Spanish again, our country would have to be devastated by the most shameful war of modern times. You know we have fought hard for it more than once before; but war and money are one, and we need all our money to keep our colonies. You must know what we feel: you yourselves have not got Belgium back yet, which the French deprived you of. Every nation has a trouble of this kind; but I am sorry we talked about Gibraltar. This is where I get out; you see the garrison is under arms. *Adios!*"

He shook hands with us, and disappeared.

BARCELONA

WE were not long in reaching our destination, but when we had driven through Barcelona and pulled up before our large and roomy hotel, which stood in the Rambla, it seemed to us as though a great riot were taking place, with endless quarrels and free fights. Our stout and dignified host, however, took off his little black cap, with a bow, and said, "*Este nada, señores, es la Rambla:*" it is always like that in the Rambla; you are knocked about amid all the whirl and bustle, and have to clear your way through the throng by the force of your elbows.

For him who wishes to see Spanish life, Barcelona at first sight is not the right place. It is undergoing a daily process of change, modernization, and so-called beautification. The Rambla is the centre of all the movement; it is a street which starts, like a river, in the upper town, where it is small and narrow, and gradually widens out into a tree-lined boulevard, until it ends in a square abutting on the harbour. The trees which are said to adorn the boulevard are the celebrated platanes, or plane-trees, and I could not avoid expressing my disappointment with them. I always thought the word platane so fine, and I had imagined something wonderful from it; whereas now I saw nothing but mutilated trunks, the colour of white human flesh, with scarcely a leaf to the pruned branches. Fortunately the square is not disfigured by them, and the spectacle of the harbour is magnificent: big ships sail in and out, and you realize at once that this is a great commercial city, and that the Spain of former days manifests itself at Barcelona. A colossal statue of Columbus adorns the centre of the harbour square, and a little beyond it is an avenue known as the Columbus Avenue, where, walking between palms and orange-trees, you enjoy an enchanting view over the blue sea. It is as though one were in one of the South American seaports captured by the Spaniards, in so vivid and powerful a light does nature display itself. The passing figures, with their richly-coloured dress and tropical character, heighten the illusion.

The next morning was a Sunday, and the lively streets of Barcelona were filled with a multitude in search of Sunday pleasures. In order to avoid the crowd in the Rambla, I went down the Calle Fernando,

and, as is always happening in Spain, involuntarily and unconsciously I found myself inside a big dark church. The church was empty; I had walked through it, and had turned to go out again, when I saw three tall women, dressed in black, come towards me. They did not see me, and knelt down just in front of me, where a statue of the Blessed Virgin stood fixed against a pillar. I drew back, but stopped a little further down, behind another pillar, so as to keep the ladies in view. Thus, thought I, Petrarch stood watching Laura in the church where he first beheld her. They seemed to be three sisters. She who knelt in the middle was certainly the oldest: she was tall, with enormous eyes, a finely hooked nose, and broad jaws, to which her black clothes and black hair lent that delicate pallor which gives some Spanish women so interesting an air of suffering. The two others, as they knelt, were half a head shorter than the eldest; they threw their arms around her neck, while she drew a prayer-book from her bosom and read out aloud, the others, with bent heads, listening and praying with her. Seen from the distance at which I stood, it was a perfect group of three women, calculated to inspire a sculptor, with its perfect harmony of line and its proud expression of mourning and grief.

I crept out of the church on tip-toe, so as not to disturb them, and was greeted by the genial warmth outside. Still filled by the thought of the three dark figures I had seen, I walked dreamily on; but when I had gone some way along the sunny street, I was struck anew by a young and handsome woman who was walking on the opposite side with true Spanish *grandezza*. She was clad in pale yellow satin, with

which her black lace mantilla made a delicious effect of colour. Protecting her head and hair from the sun, it threw over her forehead a broad shadow that descended almost to her eye-brows. What completed the picture was that in her right hand, which was ungloved and covered with rings, she carried a long, waving plant, whose stem was adorned with two beautiful roses. She carried these with the grace which a well-bred woman always displays who has anything pretty to look at in her hand.

It was not long before she was stopped by two little girls, whom she appeared to know. They both wore embroidered white mantillas over their violet silk frocks, and held their fans up against their eyes to keep off the sun. There was much kissing, laughing, and tapping of shoulders; the roses were admired, and the party separated.

It began to grow warmer, and my yellow lady crossed over to the shady side. A little further came another meeting, two bright-looking children, walking hand-in-hand, and doubtless related to the lady, for they were terribly kissed and then taken by the hand, and the pleasant little group trotted off to a neighbouring confectioner's.

A confectioner's shop in Spain is a wonderful sight —a sort of international exhibition of sugar. Besides the dishes full of tarts and pastry that shed their luscious perfumes around, there are things which one would never have thought of considering fit to eat: baskets full of coal, boxes of finely-cut tobacco, balls of string, with pens and paper; I saw sugar envelopes, containing letters made of fluffy yellow paper with sugar addresses *au choix*. I followed the group into

this lovely shop, and was at once accosted by a most obliging matron, who asked me what I lacked. I stood by the counter, while she displayed her wares. I especially admired the chocolate department. I went from one sweet corner to the other, and contented myself with buying two big sugar dolls, to decorate my room with, I said.

When these works of art were properly packed up, with a silk ribbon to carry the parcel by, and when everything, including the thanking and leave-taking, was finished, I looked round for my yellow beauty and the children, but they were gone and had disappeared from sight. All disconsolate, I pursued my way along the streets of Barcelona, carrying my parcel of sweet-stuff in my hand. Luckily it was no great distance to the Café de los Señores, where my friends were to meet me; and when the *limpia bota* boys came up to me at the entrance to black my shoes, I threw the parcel to them, and tumbling over each other, they tore it open and fought for the contents.

Barcelona is the only town in Spain that really connects the kingdom with the rest of Europe. It has none of the languid indifference characteristic of the other Spanish cities, even of Madrid. Here reign noise and movement. Sailors, factory-hands, drovers, and porters jostle one another in the streets. In the big square with the statue of Columbus the traffic is lively enough for any European business-town.

In this square, at the foot of the statue, sat a little old woman behind a mat, which protected her from the sun, and sold pictures of the monument and portraits of Columbus, with suitable inscriptions. I asked her if she sold many of these pictures. She

told me she sold many things besides, for she understood that I was astonished that she should support herself with those alone.

"Look here," she said, and fetched out a big bundle from under a piece of black canvas, "here is my collection, portraits of everybody in our great city."

And in fact it was a marvellous collection of photographs and prints. The Archbishop of Barcelona, with all the dignitaries of his household; the generals and other officers of the garrison; the Alcalde and members of the Town Council; professors of the academy; artists; a heap of actors and actresses; the bull-fighters with their companies; and lastly, the singers at all the theatres and music-halls. Some of the prints represented public buildings and places of entertainment, processions and meetings; a chaos of views very typical of this lively and busy town.

"But here, *señor*," she said, "is a lady whose portrait you must buy."

She showed me two photographs, one of a comely Catalonian peasant-woman, the other a lady on the stage, surrounded by her audience.

"There are two," I said.

"It is one and the same," she replied, with a little wink; "you should go and see her; she is playing over there," pointing to the corner of one of the adjacent streets. "But she does not play for long, only two months or so in the year, and the rest of the time she is the obedient daughter of her father, and works on the farm like any one else. But the stage is her life, and she plays like nobody in the world. They're all mad on her, and so am I."

She took up the little photographs, kissed them,

and handed them to me in a pink envelope. The price was half a peseta.

My curiosity was naturally aroused. I told my companions what I had heard, and as she generally played by day, the evenings being too warm, we went the same afternoon to the house the old woman had pointed out to me.

Oh, what a theatre! A dirty, tumbledown house, of which the lower floor served as sale or lumber-rooms. We went through a long, dark passage, and came to a big, square hall, lighted from above; a stair-case on one side led to the gallery. Now we saw where we were. It was a popular theatre and coffee-house in one, where they acted, danced, and sang. Sailors, drovers with their long whips, peasants and peasant-women, sat on long, low benches behind tables to match. There were no mirrors nor any attempt at decoration. Leaning their elbows on the tables, the audience sat with glasses of manzanilla or lemonade before them, chattering and playing with dice during the performance. A lady in pink was singing a comic song; occasionally some of the audience joined in the chorus, and stamped their feet to the tune. The curtain fell, and a piece of paper was pinned to it bearing the name of La Guerita. This was the woman we had come to see. The announcement was received with applause, and the curtain rose again immediately. I had bought a book of the play, and am able, therefore, to repeat the story.

A fine, dark woman of the people entered the stage, rushed down to the footlights, and cried to the audience:

"Isn't he here? Haven't you seen him?"

She looked into every corner of the theatre with her great eyes, and in a broken voice, exclaimed:

"He must be here, he promised me that he would be here at this time. I have wanted to see him and talk to him the whole day; I have looked for him in the streets, in the crowd on the market-place; I can bear it no longer, my breast pants with sorrow and fatigue."

She sank down upon a chair, appeared to faint away, and spoke, as though to herself:

"Ah, Pedro, how you have changed since the time when I nursed your old mother, and you came in the evening and sat on the bench outside the door by my side."

An entire transformation came over the actress's sad face: she showed all the charm and love of an *enamorada*, gave a little laugh, and acted as though her lover were sitting beside her and she keeping off his kisses with her hands. But soon she rose again from her chair, and threw herself prostrate before a little statue of the Blessed Virgin nailed to the wings. With both hands raised on high, she cried, in her beautiful contralto:

"*Oïme, Madre de Dios!* Stand by me in the hour of peril that approaches, but grant . . . . grant that the child may be beautiful, and that I may show it to him as an angel to bewitch him."

She rose to her feet, and pretending to rock a child in her arms, said:

"See, see, how beautiful it is, how prettily it laughs! Take it, kiss it, we must love and cherish it together."

She then mimicked the whole action of a mother playing with her child. She tossed it in the air, walked

hand-in-hand with it, set it down and danced to and fro before it. Suddenly she listened very attentively; a mandoline was heard in the distance, and with a wonderful expression of rapt happiness on her face, she cried, "There he is, there he is!" and flew headlong from the stage, in the same way as she had entered. The curtain fell, amid deafening shouts of applause. She returned to bow her thanks, and even in this displayed her unspeakable powers of mimicry. She did as though she were shaking hands separately with each of the rough fellows applauding her, and pressing their shouts and loud "bravos" to her bosom with a feeling of intense gratitude.

The whole performance lasted about twenty minutes, and it seemed to me that I had witnessed a complete life's history. In the three or four large theatres which Barcelona boasts, I should probably have seen something very different, but would it have been truer art?

Wandering through the streets of Barcelona, we saw how much is here done in the open air that with us takes place indoors. Even in the handsome quarters of the big shops, men sit out on the pavement printing visiting-cards, taking photographs, and cutting out silhouettes, which often resulted in a very good likeness. But in the back streets the people look upon the portion of the street that lies before their houses as forming part of their residences. An energetic mother put her little daughter on a chair before the door in order to give her a thorough washing and cleaning. A carrier climbed down from his box to have his dinner, which was prepared on a little table in front of his house. All this in the presence of, and amid conversations with, the friends and neighbours.

Before the door of a house covered with advertisements of marvellous cures and recoveries, the proprietor, a quack physician, was engaged, in full view of the public, in bandaging a porter's wounded foot. It was a picture worthy of Jan Steen. The doctor, with his bushy, grey hair, was treating the naked limb with rags and sponges, while a barefooted lad held a tin basin of water, and with great difficulty kept off a crowd of children who were pressing too closely to watch this interesting incident. A homely picture full of life and colour. And we were particularly struck with the big inscriptions that lent so great an attraction to the walls of the doctor's house. There was no disorder but he had a cure for it, and every remedy was signed with his name. In the windows stood magnificent bottles, containing . . . what do you think? Tape-worms, preserved in spirits of wine, of which he had relieved persons high-placed and lowly. Their names and addresses were noted on the bottles. There were large jars containing diseased limbs, and above the door a glorified syringe waved slowly to and fro.

When at last we returned to the Rambla, a different sight awaited us. It was the bishop's birthday, in which everybody seemed interested. The big church near the Columbus Square was brilliantly illuminated, and looked like a beacon in the evening darkness. The music of the organ and choir came streaming through the door, before which stood the beadle, carrying his large staff, and surrounded by other church officials in splendid dresses. A crowd stood silently waiting. The music sounded nearer the entrance, and a handsome carriage drew up before the door. Presently the bishop himself appeared, preceded by choristers carrying

lighted candles; the bishop, a spare and stately figure, blessed the people and took his seat in his carriage. Flowers were thrown from the adjoining houses, children offered bouquets, and escorted by torch-carriers and a lively band, we walked behind the procession to our hotel, which was close at hand.

DEPARTURE FROM SPAIN

THE days of our Spanish journey were numbered. The next morning we were to cross the frontier and travel through France *via* Perpignan. We did not propose to go straight home over Paris, but to proceed by easy daylight journeys.

The day of our departure was balmy and sunny, and when we stopped at Gerona, a few hours from the frontier, we got out to view the beautiful environs and the curious little high and low-lying town. We felt inclined to let our boxes and trunks go on, and ourselves to spend the night at Gerona; but the signal

for departure was given, and unable to make up our minds, we returned to our carriage.

As we crossed the frontier, we each had a feeling as though we had committed a sin in returning so soon; we felt that we had not seen enough of what was to be observed on the road, and that we had not sufficiently appreciated the things that we had been so fortunate as to see and enjoy. And was it not strange that just at that moment the weather changed? The sky grew dark; grey, woolly clouds lowered over the horizon. Our sunny farewell to Barcelona was followed by a gloomy, rainy leave-taking from Spain; and it was as though there were no sun save in Spain: we felt that, in leaving Spain, we were returning to the dulness of everyday life.

We reached Perpignan late at night. It was so dark that it was difficult to distinguish anything in the streets; and when our dripping and shivering coachman had brought us to our hotel, where they had been apprised of our arrival, there were no lights visible, nor a living soul to be seen. The great *porte-cochère* stood ajar; we entered, but found ourselves in a dark cavern with no discoverable outlet. The coachman, however, flung off his cape and went ahead of us, until in a corner we saw a candle burning on the top of a pile of boxes and trunks. Across these lay a young fellow with his head thrown back in a heavy sleep. The tiny flame cast gigantic shadows on the wall; the sleeper's nose was reproduced in monstrous dimensions, and his legs were so long that they ran along the whole wall. This Rembrandtesque effect of the small light in this dark space, with its fantastic shadows on floor and ceiling,

made us for a moment almost forget our cold and fatigue. The sleeper would not wake, shout as we might. We banged on the trunks with our sticks and umbrellas; the coachman called him by his name and shook him violently by the shoulders. Nothing availed. At last the coachman, who knew his way about the stable, went to the pump, filled a tin pan with water, and with his fingers dripped the cold fluid over the lad's eyes and nose. At last he opened his eyes, and sleepily stretching his arms, got up. Accustomed to such troubles, he merely said:

"*Oui, oui, messieurs*, your rooms are ready."

He lit our candles for us, we climbed the creaking stairs, and we felt the loss of our Spanish chocolate as we went to bed in the cold night.

Here we were, in France, and heard not a word of Spanish: all the interest of our journey was gone. Gone were the bare rocks, gone the quaint, mysterious villages, with their indigent, alms-begging inhabitants. We travelled through an ordinary, pleasant landscape, among people just like ourselves. We passed hills and water-falls, and as we approached Avignon it was but natural that we should sing the well-known ditty:

"Sur le pont d'Avignon l'on y danse et l'on y danse,
Sur le pont d'Avignon l'on y danse tout en rond."

But our singing stopped when we found ourselves inside the famous town. Small, dark streets, old and yet not beautiful, with a single modern street here and there. Fortunately we were made comfortable in our hotel, near the great bridge of which we had just been singing.

The bridge crosses the Rhône, the hero of this

romantic country, and it was for the Rhône's sake that we appreciated Avignon. Its waters flow in great waves towards the sea at the foot of the tall hill on which Avignon is built, and give life and movement to the sleeping city of the Popes. As in Toledo, the road leads upwards through the town from the river, through crooked streets and across small squares until the great market-place is reached. We passed I know not how many churches; and other ecclesiastical buildings, seminaries, and monasteries assist in giving the town a gloomy aspect. At last you come to a wide square which marks the topmost level of the mountain city, and out of which the streets lead downwards. There are some old buildings here, and a plantation stands against the mountain-side, while in the middle rises the lofty palace of the Popes.

It remains a characteristic historical building, in spite of the number of restorations and partial demolitions which it has had to undergo in the course of the ages; and it still makes a powerful impression. You cannot for a moment doubt that you are standing before a monument which centuries ago harboured august inmates. It is not really a palace, but a fortified castle, with a great repellant prison by its side. Those were wondrous times, when the abodes of the mightiest nobles had to be accompanied by dungeons of such vast proportions. What we call humanity was not known in those essentially religious days. A pope with sword in hand was an image that in those times aroused no astonishment.

In the middle of the grey-brown, weather-beaten wall of the prison is a heavily-barred window, from which the imprisoned tribune Cola di Rienzi watched

the executions held in the square without. Upon the ancient steps leading to the main entrance stood Pope Clement, giving his blessing to the pilgrims who had flowed from Italy and Spain, or receiving homage from the King of France. But alas! a dreary disappointment awaits one who dreams of those picturesque times; for when he draws nearer to the palace he sees that it has been turned into . . . an infantry barracks. Yet we climbed the steps and went through the big main gate; but an approaching company of French foot-soldiers blocked our way, and we climbed down from this ancient building to the sound of kettle-drums and the word of command shouted by a French officer in a *képi* and scarlet trousers.

Yet the town contains a district which may be called the business part: here the markets are held and the exchange. But here again you have a large Monastery of Saint Eutropius, and a little further a Convent of the Blessed Sacrament, a Pius Square, a Chapel of the White Penitents, a monastery dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi. And amid all this we came to a little square called the Place Jérusalem.

I saw a small low building, decorated with a Hebrew inscription: that was the synagogue. Here too, I thought, they have found a refuge, my heavily-tried kinsmen; among all these institutions of the Gentiles live members of the Chosen People. The place appeared to contain many Jews; I know their gestures and movements and their unmistakable features. But one of them, too, seemed to recognize in me a brother; at least he came up to me and asked if I was not one of them, and where I came from. He saw that we were strangers. Perhaps he thought we

needed the assistance of the community, for our clothes looked none too new. He compassionately offered to take me to the president of his congregation. I answered that he was not mistaken, but that for the present I was not in need of aid. I looked at him earnestly, and it was clear to me that he was a Russian Jew; his coarse, brown beard hung over a well-worn sort of gaberdine, and his bent head, with its deep wrinkles, was covered with a fur cap.

"How do you come here?" I asked. "You are not a Frenchman."

"The Lord, His name be praised," he replied, "has driven me far from my home. I was a well-to-do manufacturer at——" (he mentioned the name of a place in Russia which I have forgotten), "but I lost my all in a fire. I found myself thrown on the streets with my wife and five children, and nothing besides the clothes on our backs; and though my neighbours helped me in every way, the Government will not permit a Jew to be poor. I was driven from place to place, I wandered and begged of our brothers, and as I am a tanner by trade, I at last found work here. There are many factories here, and the French are clever in their work and kind to people in distress."

I asked if he felt at home here and was able to live according to his liking.

"Ah, that I should be so great a sinner!" he answered plaintively. "No, we do not live here as true believers. There is no dwelling here for us awaiting the Messiah, no life for those who should live according to the Law. Where can I have unleavened bread baked for the Passover? Where can I keep the Feast of Tabernacles? The worst of it is

that my children do not keep up their religion. They are not taught a word of Hebrew, and I fear, I fear, that they will cease to value their origin."

I comforted the old man to the best of my power, and his fervent prayer for my safe return home sounded sadly in my ears.

Through one of the little back streets that run out of the Place Jérusalem, we came to the modern part of the town, where the new Hôtel-de-Ville stands, and where the houses in the new Rue de la République show the outlines of their tedious, regular roofs against the sky. But it was here that our hotel was; the *table-d'hôte* awaited us, and the after-dinner rest.

It seems that, oppressed by the heat and tired from my long walk, I must have extended my *siesta* longer than my young friends liked; at least, when I woke, I found them gone, and I was able to take a stroll by myself. I felt drawn towards the river, and accordingly turned in the opposite direction to that we had taken in the morning. I soon reached the lower part of the town. There was the famous old bridge, of which the song tells; there was no one dancing on it, however; it looked lonely and deserted. Nor could any one very well have danced on it without tumbling into the rushing stream below; for a great portion of the bridge has been carried away, and what remains forms a ruin in the middle of the river. I looked around and found another bridge a little further up, by which I crossed to the opposite bank of the Rhône. Here it was fresh and cool; the wind had slowly risen and cleared the atmosphere. The place where I stood was planted with curiously-twisted plane-trees, whose crooked boughs hung over the

sandy banks of the river. The water flowed with great swiftness in broad waves close to my feet, and there were large stones on the tow-path, inviting one to sit down. I did so, and subjected myself to the impression of my surroundings.

The colour of the water was a bluish white, with reflections from the red light of the sun, which had set; everything in the neighbourhood was reflected in this running mirror of the Rhône, including the Palace of the Popes, high above, with all its turrets and corners. Constantly it was swept away by the stream, only to return to sight; and it was the same with the clouds, the mountains and trees, which continuously came and went. I could not remove my eyes from this changeful spectacle.

Meanwhile, as I sat there musing, I did not notice that the evening glow had vanished. I looked around at the land and mountains behind me; I could scarcely distinguish the path by which I had come. Mist and darkness lay over the water. I could hear it rushing, but I could no longer see the opposite bank. Town and suburbs had disappeared, and the Papal Palace had vanished before my eyes with the rest.

I rose quickly to return to my hotel, and took the road which I thought led to the bridge; but I walked on and walked on, it was much longer than I thought, and I could not make out what had become of the bridge that led to the opposite shore. However, I went on, hoping to meet some one who knew the way. But all became lonelier and more darksome around me. Am I going to meet ghosts? I thought, for I saw a long white figure come hovering down upon

me. I stood still, but this time I made no mistake, for I heard voices, and saw two white figures, and yet more: they were nuns, walking two and two along the foot-path, by the trees, where I was. I fell back and followed them at a distance, for their road must also be mine; they were bound for their convent in the town.

Slowly I walked in the wake of the tall, softly-babbling sisters, and at last we came to the bridge which I had expected to find in the opposite direction. I waited a little, for I wished to let the little procession cross the bridge before me. I wanted to retain the mystic picture before my eyes: the grey and dusky environment, with the white figures of the nuns moving slowly through it. Their footsteps sounded softly on the pavement of the bridge, and when they reached the opposite side, they raised a monotonous chant, which mingled with the rustling of the stream, and reaching my ears, aroused in me a wonderful melancholy. Their voices grew less and less, as the nuns passed into the town, and again all was deathly still around me, and it became time for me to hasten home. But their "Amen" continued to sound clearly in my ears; for it was as though they were saying "Amen" to my journey, to show that it was time for me to return to my own fireside.

Avignon was the last place that was put down as important in our plans. Our wanderings were at an end; a few days more, and our native land would be in sight. I crossed the bridge, slowly climbed the street to my last strange resting-place, and rocked myself to sleep with thoughts of my own house and home.

To the reader who has followed me so far I will only say that we arrived home safe and sound. Our families and friends congratulated us on our safe return from our wanderings. But the hand which once was the most eagerly extended to welcome me home, that hand was no longer there.

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